THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S CONSCIOUS LIVING MAGAZINE

FREE

MAY THROUGH AUGUST 2021 - ISSUE 77

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Half a Century of Farming, Making Music, Teaching Yoga, and Building Community

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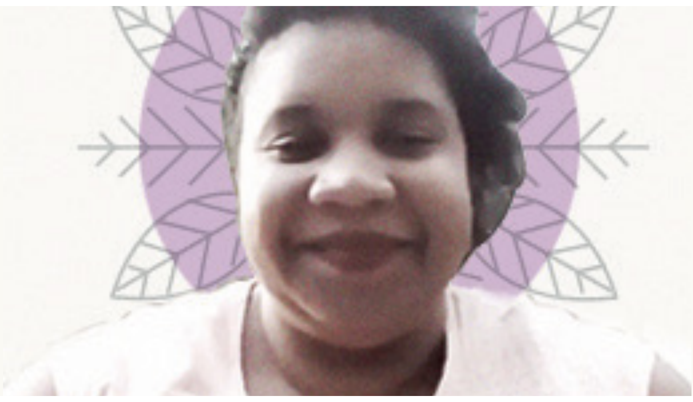

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In This Issue ~

Page 6
Conversations
with Nature
by Laurel Hogge

Page 9
The Transformative
Power of Raqs Sharqi —
Belly Dancing with
Sheila May
by Georgia Gintowt

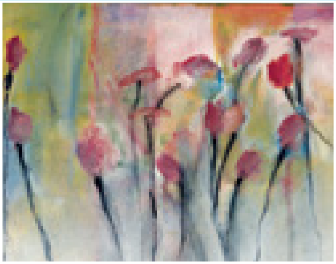
Page 29
Healers of Ann Arbor ~
Acupuncture with
Dr. Cynthia Esseichick
by Laura K. Cowan

Page 36
Necessity Grows
Innovative Farming In
Our Own Backyard
by Angela Madaras

Page 42
Life Force —
Discovering Invisible
Allies Outside Your Door
by S. K. Rosina Newton

Page 49
Conscious Parenting
Dealing With
Disappointment
Mindfully
by Anne Ward

Page 61
Divine Order,
Not Disorder —
Sarah DesJardins'
Personal Journey
by Hannah Stephenson



Page 98
Visual Journaling —
Image and Word,
a Journey to
Self-expression
by Nancy Wolfe

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**— This issue will be posted on
our website as of May 1, 2021 —**

CWJ Features

Weathering an Avalanche —
Reflections on this Pandemic Year
by Rev. Marie Duquette .... Page 4

Conversations with Nature
by Laurel Hogge .... Page 6

The Transformative Power of Raqs Sharqi —
Belly Dancing with Sheila May
by Georgia Gintowt .... Page 9

Nadim Azzam and Whip Jams — Taking a Ride with Local Musicians
by Cashmere Morley .... Page 14

Friends Lake Cooperative Community —
A Nature-Based and Spiritual Sanctuary
by Ann Rosegrant Alvarez .... Page 38

Life Force — Discovering Invisible Allies Outside Your Door
by S. K. Rosina Newton .... Page 42

Ann Arbor's Little Free Libraries —
The Book-Sharing Movement Goes Big-Time
by Madeline Strong Diehl .... Page 57

Divine Order — Not Disorder
How Sarah DesJardins' Personal Journey Informs Her Equine Therapy and Energy Healing Work
by Hannah Stephenson .... Page 61

The King Family — Half a Century of Farming, Making Music, Teaching Yoga, and Building Community
by Sandor Slomovits, with help from Emily Slomovits .... Page 67

CWJ Columns

Sustainable Health ~
Finding Wellness Through Your Spiritual Anatomy
by Linda Berry .... Page 8

Crysta Goes Visiting ~
by Crysta Coburn .... Page 12

What's New in the Community ~
by Lynda Gronlund-Naeem .... Page 22

Healers of Ann Arbor ~
Acupuncture with Dr. Cynthia Esseichick
by Laura K. Cowan .... Page 29

Leaps of Faith ~
This That, and the ODDer Things
by Laurel Hogge .... Page 30

Out of My Comfort Zone ~
by Diane Majeske
Susan Westhoff — Finding a New Level of Comfort Outdoors .... Page 44
David Hall — Personal Reflections on Comfort Zones .... Page 45

Green Living ~
Tips For Keeping Our Indoor (and Outdoor!) Air Clean
by Melissa Cooper Sargent .... Page 46

Random Acts of Kindness ~
Mutual Aid in Washtenaw County —
Can the Pandemic Have a Silver Lining?
by Madeline Strong Diehl .... Page 47

Book Reviews ~
New Reads From Long-time Favorites
by Catherine Carlson .... Page 58

Our Yoga Column ~
by Katie Hoener .... Page 60

On the Cover

Cathy King

Cathy King, along with her three sons — Billy, Kenny, and Edwin — own and manage Frog Holler Organic Farm in Brooklyn, Michigan.

Cover Photo by Mary Bortmas

CWJ Conscious and Tasty Eating and Nutrition

Food Section ....Starts on Page 32

Local Food, Safety Precautions, and Friendly Faces — How the Ann Arbor Farmers Market Survived (and Continues to Thrive) During the Year of Covid
by Angela Madaras ....Page 32

Great Tastes in Local Foods —
by Crysta Coburn
Drip House Coffee Co. ....Page 34
Bellflower Restaurant ....Page 34
Jagged Fork ....Page 35

Necessity Grows Innovative Farming In Our Own Backyard
by Angela Madaras ....Page 36

Tea Time with Peggy — Tea - More Than a Drink!
by Peggy Alaniz ....Page 37

CWJ Kids Section

The Crazy Wisdom Kids Section ....Starts on Page 48
Kids Book Reviews
by CWJ Staff .... Page 48

Conscious Parenting Column ~
Dealing With Disappointment Mindfully
by Anne Ward ....Page 49

How a Pandemic Transformed My Life After High School — Perspectives and Resources from a 2020 High School Graduate
by Ellie Theriot ....Page 50

Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community
Socially Conscious (And Distant) Kids' Art & Personal Development Programs After the Toughest Parenting Year Yet
by Laura K. Cowan ....Page 52

CWJ The Calendar

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar Section
Calendar Edited by Michelle McLemore...............................Starts on Page 82
The Calendar...Page 82
Background Info on the Teachers..Page 96

Bowenwork for Gentle Healing
by Lisa Teets ....Page 89

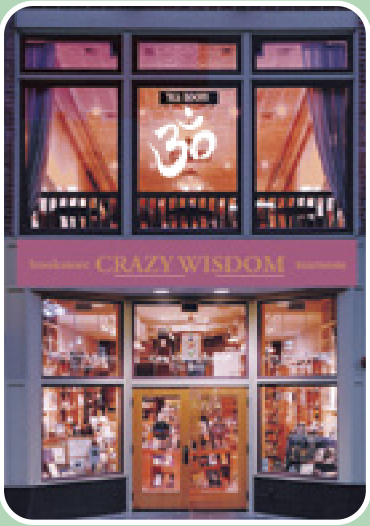
Live Love — Share the Hearts
by Michael Oliver ....Page 92

Back to Basic Health with Juli Johnson
by Chris Watkins..Page 94

Visual Journaling — Image and Word, a Journey to Self-expression
by Nancy Wolfe ....Page 98

CWJ Advertisers

Resources for Conscious Living ....Starts on Page 18
Advertiser Directory ....Page 100



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Contact calendarforms@crazywisdom.net

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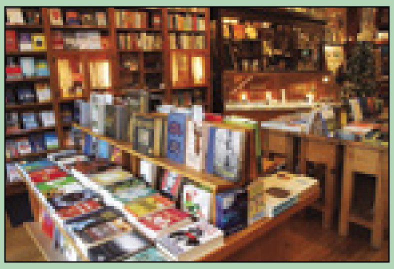

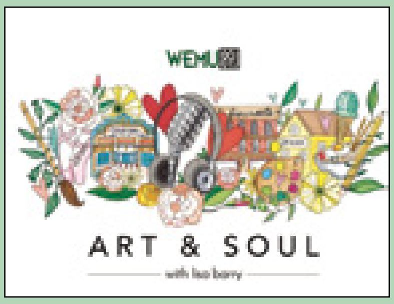

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Weathering an Avalanche

Reflections On This Pandemic Year

By Rev. Marie Duquette

I am writing this on the one-year anniversary of the first case of Covid-19 being diagnosed in Michigan. It is also the one-year anniversary of my mother's memorial service. It was held here in Ann Arbor, at the church where I serve as a pastor. Her service was live cast on Facebook, a first for our little congregation. Family and friends tuned in from Hawaii, California, South Dakota, Arizona, Texas, Ohio, Maryland, and Florida. It was the first time in my 18 years as a pastor that I fully understood the value of live casting worship, an experience I and many of my colleagues have often considered too personal and intimate…too sacred maybe…for livestreaming on social media. It seemed so…televangelistic.

Just before Covid-19 hit, I read the book, *The Weight of Ink* (Rachel Kadish), a historical fiction set in the plague in London in the 1600s. I was fascinated reading how people had survived. It makes me wonder how writers will describe this era in historical novels yet to be written. So, I decided to reflect on the little things we might remember about this time beyond the bone-chilling fear, and mind-numbing grief.

For me, last year was the first time both of my brothers had been in any of the four churches I've served while I was leading worship; it was the first time the three of us had been together in 19 years, the last time being at my father's funeral in California. It was the first time I wore a hat in church. It was the first time my congregation met my extended family and the first time my older brother, Gerry, a magnificent guitarist, played in public as everyone gathered. It was the first time I heard Led Zeppelin (*The Rain Song* and *Tangerine*), and House of the Rising Sun, as a prelude for a Memorial Service in a church.

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The very next day was a Sunday of unanticipated and completely unplanned lasts. That next day would be the last service we had inside the walls of the church before Covid-19 sent us all home for more than a year. It was the last time I saw people I loved without fabric masking our expressions. The last time I lead worship with real confidence. The last time we hugged one another, we for whom expressions of support such as touch were a regular part of our communion. It was the last time we would sing together, *When the Saints Go Marching In* with tambourines and clapping, which feels prophetic today. It was the last time we shared a meal; the last time we ate inside at a restaurant.

> It was the first time…that I fully understood the value of live casting worship, an experience I and many of my colleagues have often considered too personal and intimate…too sacred maybe…for livestreaming on social media. It seemed so…televangelistic.

These firsts and lasts have acted as mile markers as we moved through an avalanche of new. New fear, new masks, new rising numbers of those afflicted and those who have died. Bottles of hand sanitizer, like individual rocks in an avalanche, on every counter, at every entrance, in every purse and car. The roar of the disaster was heard as more and more schools were closed, graduations were cancelled, weddings were postponed, and news anchor's voices became increasingly grave and worried.

For every person who died, an average of nine people began to grieve—profoundly. We felt the weight of that grief like deep, wet, snow weighing us down.

At first, we moved in shock, much the same way one moves through the first days after burying a loved one. But by the time spring was in full bloom, many of us were highly invested in developing new ways to navigate through the dynamite blasts that marked the months of 2020. We perfected Zoom gatherings, online shopping, and curbside pick-ups. Fine restaurants pivoted to offer both groceries and carry-out family meals brought to your car. We congratulated ourselves for having resilience at the first birthday car parade and first video tributes to healthcare workers that made us both cry and hit replay. We tipped everyone, everywhere, as well as we possibly could. We wept when local shops closed.

For many, it was a year of discovering a depth of gratitude that, before the pandemic, we never realized was missing. We began to thank random truckers we met while pumping gas, every grocery store worker, every bus driver, and every doctor even when we only met them on a screen. We put signs of encouragement on our lawns, wore buttons of support, and masks emblazoned with: We ❤ Healthcare Workers.

> The very next day was a Sunday of unanticipated and completely unplanned lasts.

As our anxiety increased, we developed a collective need to do something, anything, to make us feel like we had some control. We cleaned every closet. We created individual work areas for every family member who worked at home. We developed pods that included a few people who did not live with us, confessing, in hushed voices, that we heard it was okay. We sent care packages to neighbors. We bought ice cream as often as we bought bread.

> These firsts and lasts have acted as mile markers as we moved through an avalanche of new. New fear, new masks, new rising numbers of those afflicted and those who have died.

We got our paperwork in order.

I was in an actual avalanche once. While skiing at Sundance in Utah, four of us made a game of trying to get the last lift to the top of the mountain. When we got off the last lift, we looked back and realized we were not last, as we had thought. A lift of ski patrol workers had jumped on behind us. They skied up to us quietly and said, "We are at risk of avalanche. We need you to follow us down. Try to stay in our tracks. Don't stop if you can help it. Don't yell if you fall. We'll get there together."

I have never skied so well or so quietly in my life.

For the next several days, we were confined to the A-frame log chalet in the mountains where we listened to explosives that were judiciously placed and ignited so as to control the direction of the avalanches. We drank daquiris and dared one another to jump from the hot tub into the snow outside. It was a fine distraction from the fear that lay above us.

Today, I listened to my mother's memorial service for the first time; available now because we live-streamed it then. In the welcoming remarks, I heard some words I had written, *"We often grieve alone, but healing frequently happens in community. We all carry losses of many kinds. Today we grieve with Carole's family and together we grieve our own cumulative losses. We are in this together. Standing with one another in this time of loss, may we all be healed."* I had no idea when I wrote that, that it would be prescriptive for how we would make it through the avalanche of lasts.

> For many, it was a year of discovering a depth of gratitude that, before the pandemic, we never realized was missing.

And now, it is gradually becoming time for us to all come out of the cabin. To join those who have been strategically setting the dynamite. To see the folks at our favorite coffee shop. To wipe off white boards in classrooms and greet students as they arrive. To find one another again.

If the pattern remains, the thing that follows so many firsts and lasts, seems to be the "new." My hope is that our new ways will be ones that incorporate all we have learned about ourselves, our relationships, and our ability to remain resilient and think creatively. Because people who have survived an avalanche together have a bond that can hold for a lifetime. And oh, how we might make life better, not despite—but precisely because of—all we went through and continue to go through together. And honestly, I don't think I've ever seen people rise and be transformed as much as I have this past year. It reminds me of the verse a bishop from Montana who had seen his share of inexplicable suffering used to say with great reverence: "It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

> If the pattern remains, the thing that follows so many firsts and lasts, seems to be the "new."

Rev. Marie Duquette is the pastor at King of Kings Lutheran Church. Learn more about her and the church's programs on their website kingofkingslutheran.org.

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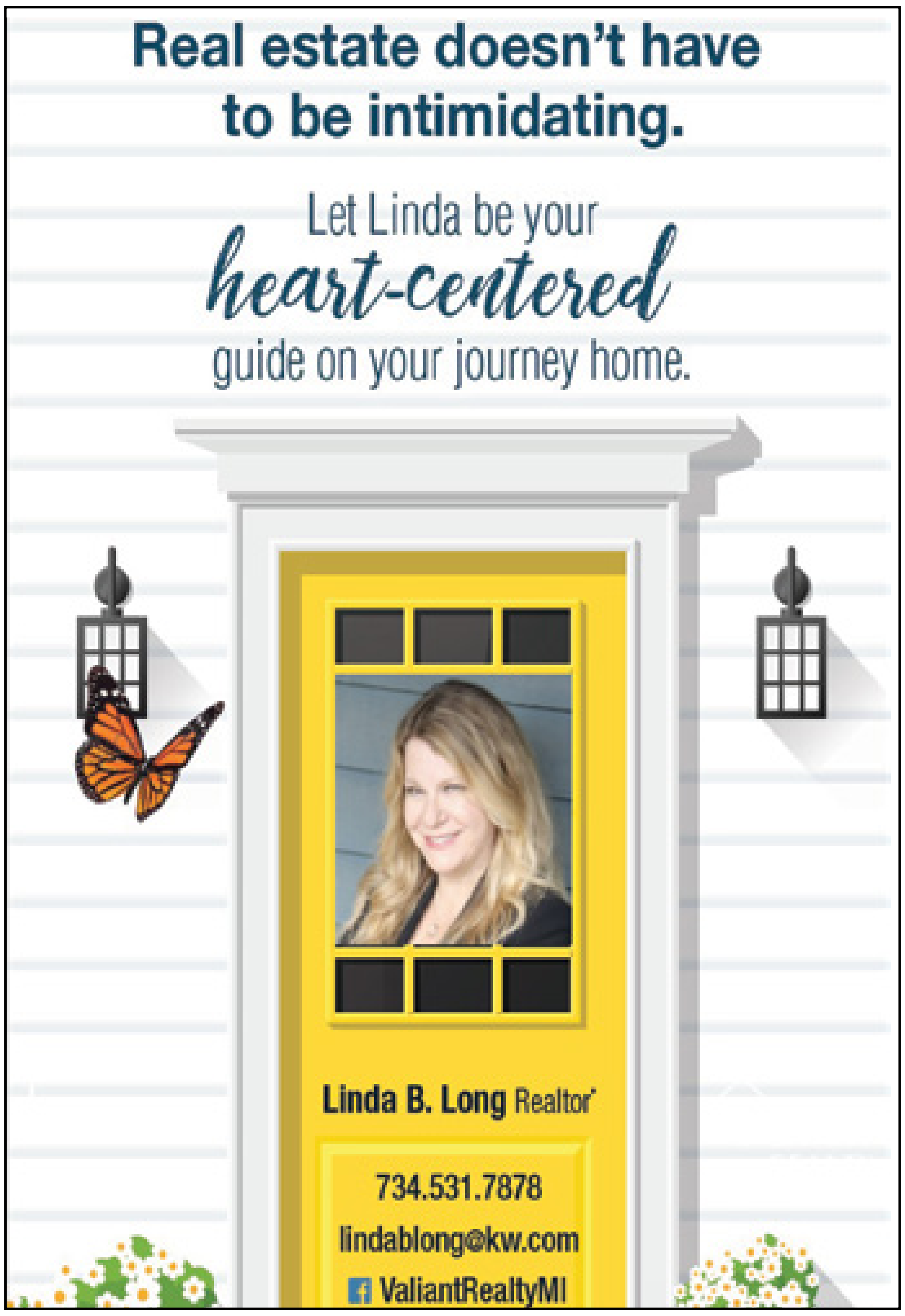

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Conversations with Nature

By Laurel Hogge

There is a reason we feel more peaceful when we spend time connecting with our pets or hiking in the forest. Nature is in perpetual energetic flow and does not manipulate energy the way people do. Humans continually try to divert, filter, suppress, create, and extinguish energy. Because of this, when we are immersed in the flow of nature, our body's energetic response is to line up with that frequency. We let go of a little of that human tendency to control energy. It's relaxing, and when we are relaxed, we are open to receive communication from our own intuition as well as Source (the name I will use in reference to God, Universe, Deity, Divinity).

We could all use some extra help to answer the questions that are dearest to us. Whether or not our questions are complex and life changing, Source is eager to guide us toward balance so we can move more confidently on our authentic and joyful path. I find that once I open the conversation, and invite Source to share messages with me, I feel an urge to get outside. Then I listen and pay attention to what is happening all around me from the ground to the sky and everywhere in between.

I began receiving messages from nature without knowing it was happening. For many years I took the same hiking routes hundreds of times without any notable nature signs. It was when I reached out specifically to ask for guidance that my outings took on a magical tone. Serendipitous discoveries became gifts with meanings that were directly given to my soul. Perhaps you can relate to some of my experiences.

At first, I came across feathers. I soon had a collection of assorted colors and sizes from many different species. And then it became common to stop in my tracks to find an animal pausing long enough for me to look into her eyes. Foxes, coyotes, wild turkeys, and deer seemed to be everywhere. With the frequency of these encounters, I became curious. I began searching online, and in books, to find out why this was happening, and I learned to apply symbolism and meaning to my wilderness encounters.

> Whether or not our questions are complex and life changing, Source is eager to guide us toward balance so we can move more confidently on our authentic and joyful path.

I learned that many spiritual traditions practice communicating with the supernatural through the natural. Some of them are ancient, and over time these traditions have created their own symbolism and language associated with this practice. It fascinates me that many Native American traditions refer to working with nature as a way of healing through "medicine" that brings us into inner balance—in other words, into harmony with nature. For example, when one is visited by crows in life, in dreams, or in meditation, "crow medicine" is being applied. Cherokee tradition teaches that Crow medicine "gives us the ability to make decisions, open ourselves to change, and experience magic in the world around us." After learning this, I stopped viewing this common bird through its popular assignment as an ominous, dark pest. I now see a bright reminder that spiritual magic is everywhere.

There are hundreds of elements in nature that have symbolic healing power. In other words, a coyote is not simply a wild dog. It carries with it information—depending on where it is seen, whether it is calling out or silent, and whether it is playing, hiding, hunting, eating, or being watchful.

In the Navajo tradition, Coyote is a symbol of mischief and playfulness. Seeing one is usually a reminder to take life less seriously. I have taken this as the message I needed many times. However, there was a time I needed a different message. I was at an important crossroads in life when I needed to transition from homemaker for a family of six to a full-time career that would bring financial independence. Seeing a coyote crouched at the edge of my neighbor's field and focused on the flock of Canada geese in front of it, I was encouraged to trust Source that I would find what I needed. The message was that it was a time to be less carefree and to focus on survival. Even when I was discouraged by job application rejections, Source reassured me that I have useful skills. I just might have to be patient as I prepared for the right moment to pounce.

> As you begin to examine the symbolism behind your own nature discoveries, you will find that Source has a message intended just for you.

Just remember, when searching out the meaning of a nature message you received, that the interpretation for nature messages varies depending on the author of the website or book. Don't despair! This creates an added opportunity to personalize your experience with nature messages. For example, when blue jays began showing up for me in a dramatic way, I did a quick search for its spirit meaning. I was overwhelmed to find there were multiple variations on its meaning. Once I spent time considering its importance for me personally, I then assigned the meaning that resonated most for me in that moment. Blue jay became a symbol of coming into my own strength and sharing wisdom with others. I was in yoga teacher training, learning about the chakra system, when I realized the blue jay's turquoise plumes coincide with the color of the throat chakra. So, it is no coincidence that when I most needed encouragement to be seen and heard as a confident teacher, Source would

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When searching out the meaning of a nature message you received, that the interpretation for nature messages varies depending on the author of the website or book. Don't despair! This creates an added opportunity to personalize your experience with nature messages.

send a blue jay message. A bright blue streak would fly across my path just in time to remind me not to be afraid to be seen. Or I could hear their unmistakable call loud and clear and it was a reminder to me that I needed to speak up and speak clearly.

If you want to connect to Source through nature, try looking at it as a type of meditation. Similar to being in the flow of nature, meditation helps us surrender to energetic flow. Both are also a dialogue in the sense that we can ask questions and speak our needs to Source, and with gratitude and openness we can anticipate that an answer will come to us. Like meditation, it takes practice to develop and fine tune an approach that works best for each individual. That's the fun part because it means we get to be curious and creative. We can use existing techniques or develop our own. It's really not important how the information comes through. It's about using your beautiful intuitive guide to connect with Source through nature.

As you begin to examine the symbolism behind your own nature discoveries, you will find that Source has a message intended just for you. There is no need to be overly anxious. Just be aware. Open your heart and surrender to the magic of discovering what is guiding you and what it is trying to tell you. Invite your spirit guides to communicate through nature messages; then, go about your day in a spirit of trust that what is needed will come at the moment you need it.

And remember to thank Source and nature, because gratitude opens us up even more to receive a continual and flowing dialogue.

As you begin to examine the symbolism behind your own nature discoveries, you will find that Source has a message intended just for you.

Suggestions for communicating with and through nature:

- Meditate to open your heart and mind
- Ask to be guided through nature
- Be in nature as often as possible
- Learn traditional symbolism
- Explore your own symbolism and write it down
- Take note of nature in dreams as well as in waking life

It fascinates me that many Native American traditions refer to working with nature as a way of healing through "medicine" that brings us into inner balance—in other words, into harmony with nature.

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Sustainable Health

Finding Wellness Through Your Spiritual Anatomy

By Linda Berry

What do you get when a poet and a chiropractor set out to explore and revitalize the physical body from a spiritual perspective? Poet Elizabeth Alberda and I created the work and workshops called Spiritual Anatomy. Our journey took us from the inner workings of the body's organs and tissue to the mystical and mythical writings and imaginings of teachers and scholars.

What do you get when a poet and a chiropractor set out to explore and revitalize the physical body from a spiritual perspective?

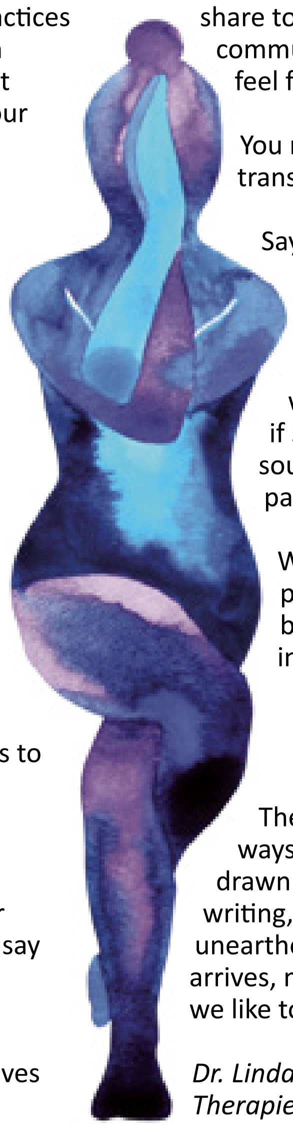
At its heart, spiritual anatomy became a practice—a study of the human body as a reflection of the soul. We visualized the soul telling its story through the physical body, using tools like meditation, writing, movement, and sound to evoke and express that which was within. Each month we focused on the unique aspects of a certain body part which allowed us to call forth that which needed healing and that which provided strength.

As beings composed of a Spiritual Anatomy, we embody balance, homeostasis, wholeness, and health. Our brain holds the vision of our whole, unblemished health. Science shows that after amputation a "phantom limb" remains. Recovering yourself through Spiritual Anatomy allows you to envision your perfection as a dance, a poem, a song, or a dream.

How do we recapture this innocent acceptance of our wholeness, our holiness? Harnessing the power within through physical, energetic, creative, intellectual, and meditative exercises, Elizabeth and I set out with a group of intrepid explorers. As the chiropractor, I built the scaffold of body parts and processes by giving names and teaching functions. Elizabeth blew soul wind into the forms with words and spirit practices.

We relied heavily on myth, folk wisdom, spiritual teachers, and practices from our own investigation and trainings for the groundwork. Each month, as a different system of the body was unveiled, we let Spirit guide us and our group toward the achievement of greater joy in our lives.

At its heart, spiritual anatomy became a practice—a study of the human body as a reflection of the soul.



I invite you now to allow yourself to expand the "Health within You" with one small exercise. Consider that health is the entity within, and we are all born with a large, all-encompassing amount of it. Within us is a life force so powerful, so intelligent that it commands our heart to beat, our lungs to expand and contract, our hormones to rise and fall, our digestive system to extract exactly what it is needed—and this happens moment to moment all the years of our lives.

Prepare for this experience by being seated in a comfortable position with pen and paper handy for recording words, images, or messages you may receive from within. If you wish, you could record your voice describing this process and then play it while meditating. Or you could have a trusted companion read the words to you and you signal when to pause.

The meditation:
The intention of this meditation can be whatever you designate. However, consider this an opportunity to Re-member parts of your anatomy that may be lost, or neglected, or just have something to say to you!

Close your eyes and visualize yourself walking a path through the woods. Know that you are safe and protected by the spirit that moves through all things. Feel the warm breeze, smell the leaves and the undergrowth, hear the water flow in the brook by the side of the path. Up ahead the path crosses over the brook on a small wooden bridge. As you walk across you come to a large oak door. You step forward and open the door. In front of you now is an open meadow with wildflowers, soft grass, and singing birds. In the center of the meadow is a round table with several chairs. You take a seat at the table facing the open doorway you just passed through.

With silent intent, you ask your spirit guide, your ancient one, to sit on your left side. Thank them for coming when they arrive. Now ask that your inner creative, playful, joyful child come and sit on your right side. Thank them for coming.

Now announce your intention for being here today. (Ours was to ask for all our body parts still in need of healing or of communicating in some way to come to the table with us). Say, "I have undertaken a journey of merging flesh and spirit into an integrated whole through the process of spiritual anatomy. I now ask that any body parts that have information or wish to be present for this integration to come and participate or observe. I invite you to enter one at a time through the open door and be with us at the table."

We relied heavily on myth, folk wisdom, spiritual teachers, and practices from our own investigation and trainings for the groundwork.

Focus your attention now on the doorway with an open heart, open mind, and sense of play.

Who has arrived? (I once had my intestines slither in!) Thank the body part for joining you and say, "I'm open and eager to hear what you have to say, to know what you may need, and to receive any information you can share to help us on our journey toward wholeness. If you are willing to communicate with words, sounds, pictures, or even just feelings, please feel free to do so. If you just wish to be present as witness, join us."

You may wish to take time to write down what each body part transmits before moving to the next part of the exercise.

Say, "Now from the intricate richness of the left and right halves of our brain, from the masculine and the feminine, from our playful, creative self, and our spiritual, mystical, ancient self, we offer these possibilities" to let the body part know that the three selves gathered here would like to offer possibilities for healing, wholeness, and reintegration. Ask if this would be acceptable and if so continue. Allow the ideas to flow as a beam of light, color, and sound to the body part who has arrived. Do this for as many body parts as wish to join the gathering.

When a sense of completion for this day arrives, thank all the body parts for their participation. Stand and offer each a loving embrace before closing. Go back through the door, down the path, and back into the present moment.

Whatever arrives, may it ignite with you a cohesion of your body and your soul, what we like to call your Spiritual Anatomy.

The energy wave generated by this exercise may manifest in many ways. Your dreams could be rich and vivid. You may find yourself drawn to some particular music or movement. You may rediscover yoga, writing, or a forgotten art form from your past. Or perhaps you have unearthed fodder for talk therapy or sharing with a friend. Whatever arrives, may it ignite with you a cohesion of your body and your soul, what we like to call your Spiritual Anatomy.

Dr. Linda Berry is the co-founder of Complete Chiropractic and Bodywork Therapies. For more info: https://chiroannarbor.com.

The Transformative Power of Raqs Sharqi – Belly Dancing with Sheila May

Raqs Sharqi, or in Westernized terms, “belly dance,” is a classical style of Egyptian dance utilizing complex movements of the torso, arms, and hips.

Continued on next page

The Transformative Power of Raqs Sharqi – Belly Dancing with Sheila May

By Georgia Gintowt
Photography by Edda Pacifico

Raqs Sharqi, or in Westernized terms, “belly dance,” is a classical style of Egyptian dance utilizing complex movements of the torso, arms, and hips. It is widely known as a playful and sensual dance that celebrates the feminine form. Belly dance movements have been inspired by a long history of dances ranging from within Egypt to other cultures across Eurasia.

Records of the dance are scarce. However, it is clear that certain postures and movements from the current style of Egyptian Raqs Sharqi derive from the dances of traveling nomadic people that eventually landed in Egypt. These traveling people made their living dancing as entertainers, and in each place they settled they assimilated to the culture and adapted new dance techniques to add to their own.

Legends within the belly dance community allude to the dance’s originally being a birthing ritual. Many of the movements associated with belly dance, such as pelvic movements and abdominal undulations, are physically intuitive across cultures, due to their natural stimulation of the abdomen and uterus. Ancient cultures across the world used these movements in fertility rites, and thus was born the legend of belly dance’s originating as a birthing ritual. Yet, all genders and body types can reap the health benefits, which include core strengthening and toning of the arms and legs.

Ever since I was young, I have had a fascination with belly dancers. I lived in a small community in which a troupe of dancers would perform at local events. Every time I saw them perform I was captivated by their simultaneous sensuality and strength. On my own, I would look up videos of belly dancers and practice movements alone in my room. Something about the music, the costumes, and the energy of the movements attracted me.

When I moved to Ann Arbor I found out about Sheila May’s local belly dance classes and decided to make my dream of being a belly dancer come to fruition. I walked into the dance room to find women of all different ages and body types wearing hip scarves and laughing with each other, while Arabic music played in the background. We stood separately in our own spaces but danced as a group, each staring down our own reflection as we watched our bodies move to the music.

Sheila, who started dancing at age 20, believes that it’s never too late to start dancing.

As I began my belly dance journey, I experienced for myself why those belly dancers always looked so strong. The dance not only physically changed my body, but it changed the way I felt about myself. Belly dancing was not just an enjoyable way to move, but also a path to becoming more in touch with myself. Each time I struggled to learn a movement, the reward of finally nailing it was a lasting achievement. Even when just walking around the grocery store, shifting my weight as I leaned in to look at a product, I could feel the effects of all the dancing on my body. The abdomen- and hip-focused movements of the dance (the ones that cultures have used throughout centuries to aid in childbirth) made me appreciate the way I was built and the power in my movements. The physical strength, sense of achievement, and overall love for my body made me feel like the strongest version of myself, and I fell in love with belly dance even more.

The dance not only physically changed my body, but it changed the way I felt about myself.

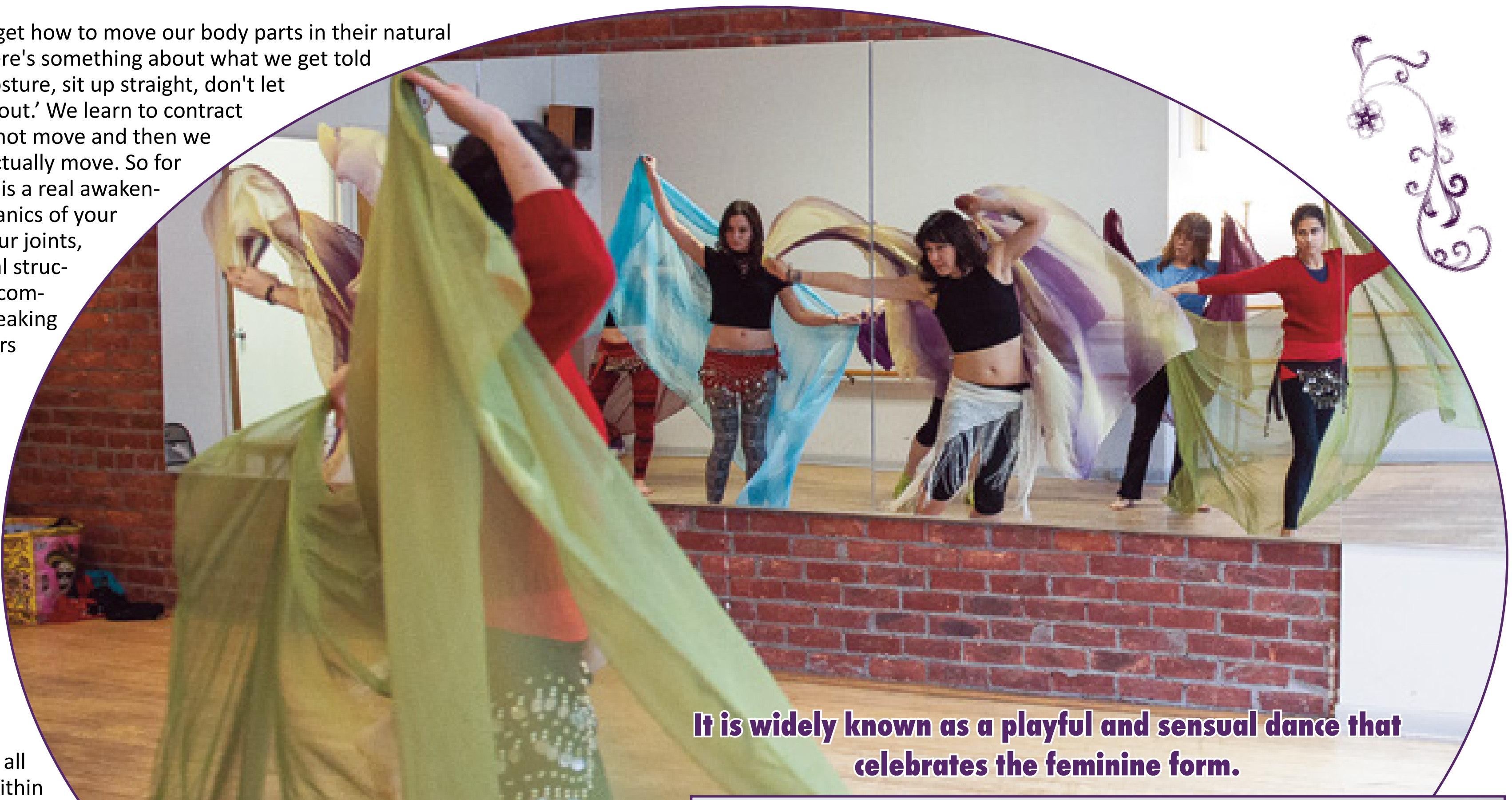
Western society praises the use of our minds more than our bodies. With so much emphasis on using the internet, we are able to sit down at a desk for hours and use only our minds to complete tasks or learn new information. But, in doing this we lose touch with our physical body, which is what happened to me. Belly dance serves as an outlet for me to build a mind-body connection, in which my thoughts and feelings can physically manifest into fluid movements that represent myself.

Recently, I sat down with my dance teacher, Sheila May, to discuss her thoughts on why belly dance has the power to transform a person's relationship with her body. May, who started dancing at age 20, believes that it’s never too late to start dancing. She says that belly dance is an avenue to accessing your natural bodily movements. “Belly dance, if you boil it down, just equates to moving your body in its natural form. The amazing thing is that I see a lot of people, especially as we’ve progressed

...all genders and body types can reap the health benefits, which include core strengthening and toning of the arms and legs.

through life, forget how to move our body parts in their natural way. And so, there's something about what we get told—'have good posture, sit up straight, don't let your belly hang out.' We learn to contract everything and not move and then we forget how to actually move. So for me, belly dance is a real awakening of the mechanics of your muscles, and your joints, and your skeletal structure, and being comfortable with breaking down the barriers that our culture tells us."

Many traditional Western dances involve two partners moving across the floor in a controlled manner. May loves belly dance because you're not dependent on anyone else; it's all about moving within your own space. She strongly believes that everyone should try belly dance at least once, even if they never do it again. She said, "I think when people feel intimidated about taking a dance class or a belly dance class, it's because we all have this vision in our head of what dance is. Dance is moving around a room, executing steps, traveling around the space. Belly dance is so contained to just your own body and your own space that it's really different…"



It is widely known as a playful and sensual dance that celebrates the feminine form.

Awakening dormant movements through belly dance and learning to feel comfortable dancing next to others made me feel confident, accomplished, and comfortable in my own skin.

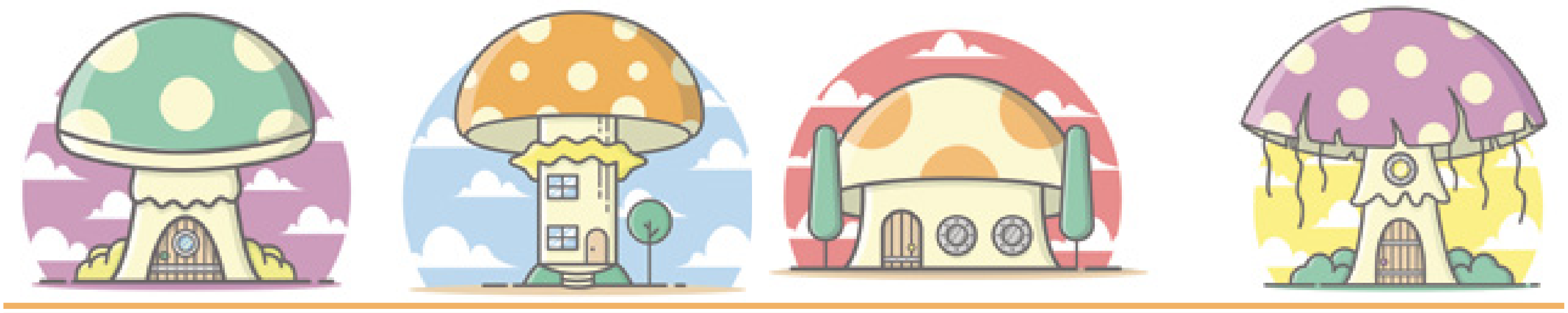
When we discussed dance as a healing art form, something I've personally experienced, May stressed that dancing is a great way to learn to feel comfortable in your own skin while in the presence of others doing the same. She commented, "To be vulnerable while in a room with people of different sizes and different ages can be scary, but if you can let that happen, it's such a huge relief. And to have it drilled into you that no matter what you do, it's okay. You can be vulnerable. No one's going to hurt you. Just be you."

Awakening dormant movements through belly dance and learning to feel comfortable dancing next to others made me feel confident, accomplished, and comfortable in my own skin. The movements felt natural, yet were still challenging to reawaken. Anyone who belly dances (or dances at all) knows about the art form's transformative quality. May believes that more people should experience the self love that comes from dance, and she stressed, "How you move your body is how you move your body. It might feel a little bit difficult at first because we haven't accessed that movement in a really long time, but just believe and have faith and let it happen. I think that whether anybody belly dances ever again after my classes, if they walk away just feeling a little bit more comfortable in their own skin and confident with the movement that their body does—no matter what shape, no matter what age – then that's a win."

Due to pandemic restrictions, Sheila May holds livestreaming virtual belly dance classes via Zoom on Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings. For more information about Sheila May and her classes, visit www.leilahdances.com.

"I think that whether anybody belly dances ever again after my classes, if they walk away just feeling a little bit more comfortable in their own skin and confident with the movement that their body does—no matter what shape, no matter what age— then that's a win."

CRYSTA GOES VISITING



IN THIS COLUMN CRYSTA COBURN WRITES ABOUT CRAZY-WISDOMESQUE PEOPLE AND HAPPENINGS AROUND ANN ARBOR.

ERIN BERGER AND THE BOOKEND CANDLE CO.

"I have always loved reading, collecting books, and visiting libraries. There's nothing like immersing yourself in a good book," said Erin Berger, the woman behind Ypsilanti-based Bookend Candle Co. You and me both, friend!

Originally from Garden City, Berger attended grad school at Eastern Michigan University, where she "grew to love Ypsilanti, especially the (surprisingly affordable) old houses." The year following completing her master's degree in historic preservation, she bought her home in the Historic District. As for starting her own home-based candle business, she said, "I remember attending DIYpsi in the summer of 2017 and thinking about how amazing the artists were and what in the world could I create to take part in the event. Later that year, I decided to start what would become Bookend Candle Co."

Berger is a self-taught candlemaker. "I learned through trial and error and many nights spent in deep dives on candle-making forums," she said. "But the best part is that for every candle that doesn't make the cut, I still get to burn it myself." Deciding on a name was difficult, she said, "until [she] looked around at [her] collection of candles interspersed throughout the shelves and stacks of books" of her home. "Most were functioning as impromptu bookends. And that was it; Bookend Candle Co. had a name."

> Berger shared that one thing that inspires her business is "being able to provide people with a sense of comfort and happiness through scent."

Her candles are 100% soy made without dyes or phthalates. "I do my best to offer the highest quality product in terms of performance, safety, and sustainability," Berger explained. "I have asthma myself and don't want to be breathing in harmful chemicals. I would never sell a product that is not up to my own standards, so I use as natural components as possible and buy from vendors I trust. Our tagline is 'realistically scented and ethically made,' and I take that to heart."

Some of the scents in the Signature Collection are Breathe Easy (scent notes: camphor, eucalyptus, and mint), Rare Book Room (scent notes: cedarwood, leather, and vanilla), and Mountainside Cabin (scent notes: balsam, cedar, and wood-burning fireplace). There is also a Spring and Summer Collection with names like Spring Meadow, Kitchen Garden, and Seaside Cottage. If you are in a situation where you can't burn candles, there are also wax melts and reed diffusers.

All of these names evoke in me a sense of comfort and relaxation. Berger shared that one thing that inspires her business is "being able to provide people with a sense of comfort and happiness through scent." She went on to say, "My goal is to transport you to a different place or time. Hearing one of my candles reminds someone of time spent as a child with a grandparent no longer with them makes it all worth it."

For more information and a list of shops that carry Bookend Candle Co. products, visit www.bookendcandleco.com. Bergen can be contacted at erin@bookendcandleco.com or via Instagram @bookendcandleco.

LYANNA BENNETT AND MYSTIC CREATIONS

Lyanna Bennett has moved around a lot in her life, but she is putting down roots in Ann Arbor. She told me, "I fell in love with Ann Arbor after spending a lot of time here in my early 20s and finally decided to settle in one place." And her specialties certainly fit right in with our community.

"I first discovered mysticism when I was 12 years old," she shared with me. "I was fascinated by the supernatural nature of it. Spells and potions and magickal beings were what drew me in, but it brought me to the concept of natural healing, herbalism, and spiritual guidance, which is what led me toward the path I am on today … offering services to the community reading tarot, runes, and tea leaves, as well as offering advice on alternative healing methods." Bennett is mostly self-taught, but, she said, "I did go to college to learn more about plants and the human body in order to know more about how natural medicine works."

The drive to help people is what inspires her. "I have always been drawn to serve others," she said. "I was a home health aid for many years, I have

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>
> —Lyanna Bennett

always worked in some sort of customer service industry, and I even thought about going into the military to be a medic." Bennett is also motivated to make her spiritual practices a central part of her life. "I do think we all find the path that we are meant to be on," she said.

The name Mystical Creations came to Bennett one day after working for a metaphysical store in Lansing. In addition to offering private readings, Bennett plans to soon add "online courses ... covering everything from the basics of witchcraft to divination techniques, properties of herbalism, advanced magick, the philosophy of magick, and many more."

Right now, you can find Bennet offering tarot cards and runic divination readings at Evenstar's Chalice in Ypsilanti.

To make an appointment, visit facebook.com/lyannabennett.mystic or call (734) 680-2707. For in-person readings, visit Evenstar's Chalice in Ypsilanti on Thursdays 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. or Saturdays 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Appointments can also be scheduled by calling Evenstar's Chalice at (734) 905-7980.

DREW HILL AND THE DREWBIE'S ZOO

"I am all about fun," said Ann Arbor native Drew Hill. "I try to find a little fun and whimsy in everything I do, and since starting Drewbie's Zoo, my goal has been to share that with others."

Hill attended Pioneer High School then studied Costume Design at the University of Michigan. "Since graduating college," he said, "I've lived in Chicago and Los Angeles, but Ann Arbor keeps calling me back. It's such an amazing city to live in, and it's great to be close to my family."

It was Hill's grandmother who taught him how to knit when he was ten years old. "I became obsessed!" he said. "I knit on and off all the way through middle school and high school. When I was in my last year at Pioneer, I started a small club for knitting and yarn crafts, and it was at this time that I first picked up a crochet hook. I taught myself from a book and was amazed at the artistic freedom that crochet offers."

> One of the best parts about running a small business is that I can provide something completely unique….
>
> —Drew Hill

When a good friend from high school and his wife were expecting their first child, Hill first tried his hand at *amigurumi,* the Japanese art of knitting or crocheting small stuffed animals and other anthropomorphic creatures, which make up the bulk of Drewbie's Zoo.

Where did the name Drewbie's Zoo come from? "It wasn't until I opened an Etsy shop that I realized I would need some sort of business name, which was surprisingly difficult," Hill said. "I wanted it to have something to do with animals and to be a little whimsical. I toyed around with a lot of different ideas, but I settled on Drewbie's Zoo because it was the most fun to say out loud!"

Looking through Hill's Instagram, there is no denying his talent or the cuteness of his clever creations. Said Hill, "Sometimes you just need something cute or punny or beautiful to make you smile, and providing that for others definitely makes me smile!" Some of my personal favorites are the adorable little dragons, smiling tea cups and coffee mugs, the cast of the Lion King, and Luna from Sailor Moon (I grew up in the 90s). But, they all make me smile! And how inspiring for a young person to have a plush Ruth Bader Ginsburg or Rosie the Riveter?

If you have an idea in mind, but don't see it in the shop, worry not because Hill takes special orders. He explained, "One of the best parts about running a small business is that I can provide something completely unique, whether it's your favorite animal, character, or even a replica of your pet!"

For more information, visit drewbieszoo.etsy.com or instagram.com/drewbieszoo. Hill can be contacted through Etsy or at drewbieszoo@gmail.com.

Nadim Azzam and Whip Jams

Taking a Ride with Local Musicians

Photo by Jacob Hamilton/MLive.com

By Cashmere Morley

In the first few seconds of the pilot episode of *Whip Jams*, the viewer is taken on a kaleidoscopic tour through downtown Ann Arbor that feels almost foreign in 2021: windows down, sun splashing across laughing faces, music blasting. This is not a view one might associate with the current times, but in a world where human connection feels lost, comes a Youtube video series that aims to fuel a new kind of connectedness.

Nadim Azzam is many things: creator, producer, marketer, promoter, and host of *Whip Jams*, to name a few. But before that, or perhaps beyond that, Azzam is a musician.

Azzam began performing music in high school, and today, is very involved in the Ann Arbor music scene. He collaborates with the Blind Pig, works with the Ann Arbor Northside Community Church, and is a songwriter for the Neutral Zone off Washington.

Indie Soul Artist Dani Darling with Whip Jams host Nadim Azzam

In a world where human connection feels lost, comes a Youtube video series that aims to fuel a new kind of connectedness.

But on Wednesdays, he'll roll up in his black Honda Civic, ready to pick up the latest and greatest talent of Ann Arbor/Ypsi. Azzam provides the whip. The artist provides the jam. And they're off, buzzing around the city, shooting the breeze while Azzam and crew collect live audio from whomever is accompanying him in his whip that day.

But on Wednesdays, he'll roll up in his black Honda Civic, ready to pick up the latest and greatest talent of Ann Arbor/Ypsi.

"*Whip Jams* is a curation across the music genre. It's all about spotlighting music and musicians in the area and giving them a platform to reach their current audiences with a little more detail," said Azzam. "Just being able to bring awareness to our community of all the artists that are here in Ann Arbor/Ypsi, especially when we can't go see live shows and everything, is what *Whip Jams* is all about."

The episodes in the first season of *Whip Jams*, out now, are bite-sized video interviews, all less than ten minutes in length. Short by design, to keep ever-lessening viewer attention spans sharp, but deep in content, so that anyone watching will take away some unknown facts and tidbits about the local music scene, *Whip Jams* is not quite like anything that has come before.

Debuting in December of 2020, *Whip Jams* shot all of its episodes before the pandemic hit. While Covid-19 has put a stall on production, Azzam is working toward airing new episodes over the summer.

Season one features interviews of Ann Arbor musicians Ki5, Mirror Monster, and Dani Darling; Flint's D. Vaughn the Illest; and Detroit-native Pariis Noel. Watching the show, one cannot help but compare *Whip Jams* to *Carpool Karaoke*, but Azzam insists they are far from similar.

"With *Carpool Karaoke*, it's sort of a late-night attraction, more for someone who is looking for comedy. They set it up almost as a gag bit, and it's really a circuit opportunity for artists who are already established. It's part of the press run up to put out an album.The truth is, the idea of *Whip Jams* developed before I knew what *Carpool Karaoke* was," said Azzam. "I think it definitely existed by then, but we didn't know about it until we were well into production. But to me, the primary difference is that *Whip Jams* is really about music discovery. We want to spotlight artists who aren't already at the caliber of getting onto the late night shows. We want to provide them the opportunity to grow their audience."

Azzam said the inception of the show came about in 2018, when he and a friend would drive around, bouncing the new music they were creating off one another. Since Azzam knew all about working in a creative, competitive field, and how important it was for musicians to get their music out there on as many outlets as possible, he wanted to craft a music interview experience that felt unique. To Azzam, this kind of informal setting of interviewing in a car felt like the most organic, honest way to get people to connect to new sounds.

"Especially for my generation, growing up as an American kid in the Midwest, so much of my social interactions came from me sitting in the car and having life talks with friends, or writing music. We thought the idea of keeping the show in an informal setting would allow for some of that natural conversation to progress, in a way that maybe a formal sitting in an interview doesn't accomplish. But it's also fun because, driving around, it keeps artists on their toes."

Dani Darling, the central artist showcased in episode five, the finale of *Whip Jams* season one, agreed that interviewing in a car took away a lot of the traditional interview pressures and also made the interview more creative.

"When you're doing an interview, there's a lot that you're thinking about. The pressure's on, the cameras are rolling, you've got a lot of things running around in your mind. But here, the first thing I noticed was that no one's staring at you while you're trying to answer a question. I think that just makes it feel more natural and more casual," said Darling.

Vocal Looping Artist Ki5 with Nadim Azzam

> Whip Jams is a curation across the music genre. It's all about spotlighting music and musicians in the area and giving them a platform to reach their current audiences with a little more detail.
>
> — Nadim Azzam

"We're talking, but we're also kind of both looking at traffic. And we were local! I feel like that was one of my favorite parts of all the episodes—seeing where people were getting picked up around town. I feel like it really gave insight into who they were. I'm really into theater stuff outside of music, so I thought it was fitting to get picked up at the Michigan Theater, for instance."

Darling, whose soulful lo-fi musical style draws from deep black opera and reggae roots, thinks that *Whip Jams* is "one of a kind." A bold video series with an interview style all its own, Darling believes that what Azzam and team have created is one of those shows that "delves deeper into the artists' psyche,'' to create a product that viewers will be able to relate to their own lives.

"This show allows you to see different kinds of artists in different stages of artistry. You've got really seasoned pros like Pariis Noel, and you have music artists turned electronic fiends who are still figuring out their particular sound," Darling said.

"Everyone's just doing their thing and being individual and that's what's amazing about music, and that's what's amazing about humans. And that's why I think it's a cool concept to explore differences between people," said Darling. "I think that people can relate to that, you know? Hearing people's stories in a setting like this, you get to uncover things that resonate with you in that artist. For people to be that open and honest about who they are and what they've gone through to get to this point, only inspires the same in other people."

Azzam said that his interview style aims to dig a little deeper into what fuels artists to create.

"Obviously, we start by talking about the general stuff. We have to give the audience some simple background as to who this artist is. But then, I wanted to gather some fun facts and some interesting stuff. I care about going deep, I want to know about why this person makes music and who they are, what inspires them and how they got there," said Azzam.

"As a young artist myself, I'm always watching interviews with people I look up to, trying to glean some insight. Even just hearing the process of how an artist chooses their name and their thought process behind that, or what were the biggest

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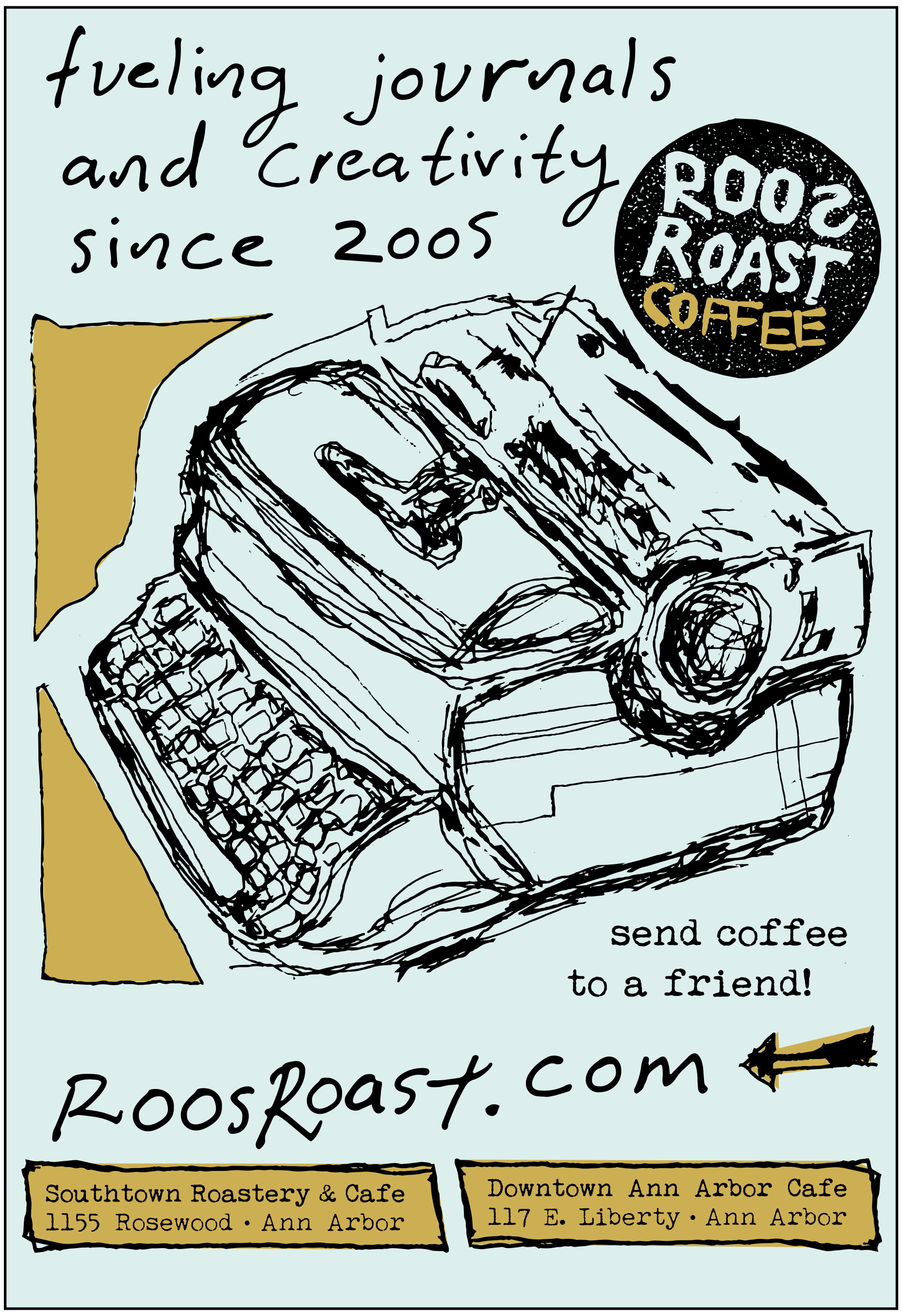
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Nadim Azzam and Whip Jams

Continued

Detroit Rapper Pariis Noel with Nadim Azzam

influences on them musically, questions like that can lead to a much more organic conversation. That's what I strive to pursue with *Whip Jams*. I'm really intent on featuring artists that make you feel something deeper than the surface level."

> Short by design, to keep ever-lessening viewer attention spans sharp, but deep in content, so that anyone watching will take away some unknown facts and tidbits about the local music scene, Whip Jams is not quite like anything that has come before.

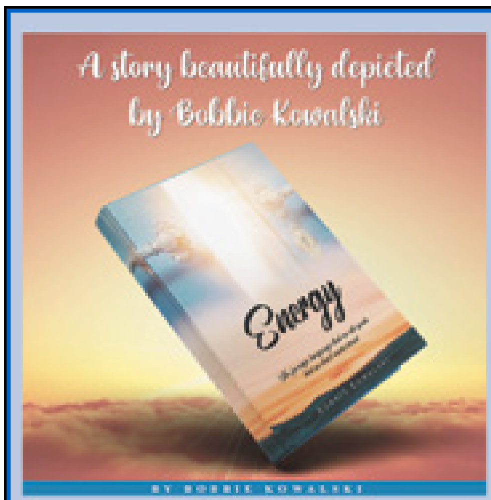
Azzam stresses the importance of his creative team, who helped him get *Whip Jams* off the ground.

"We work with an amazing, talented crew. We have local videographers come in with all these tiny cameras, making sure we get the perfect shots while driving around. Elliott Sabbagh, our sound guy, captures the audio that you are hearing live, from the car. That's not something we dub over later. And that's a testament to the amazing people we have, who are all part of this production," said Azzam. "It's really crazy. I'm really grateful and proud of the team that we have, that's to me, the most impressive thing about the whole experience. These really high-level professionals coming together to work on this scrappy little start-up project," Azzam said.

He highlights some of the trickier parts of filming on the road. Said Azzam, "if it's just the singer and let's say they have a beat, you know, like a rapper does. You can play the instrumental in the car and they can sing and rap over it. But, if you have, you know, like Ki5 uses a looper. Then, we're like okay.... we have to get one of those adapters to run power in the car so you can plug it in. We're running the laptop in the backseat, recording everything live, so it's a unique challenge. I think the next level, our next greatest challenge, is to record a live band, and figuring out all the logistics behind an idea like that."

Check out the first season of Whip Jams on their Youtube channel, @WhipJams. For behind the scenes and more, check out @WhipJams across all social media platforms.

WHIP JAMS
WHIP JAMS
WHIP JAMS
WHIP JAMS


A story beautifully depicted by Bobbie Kowalski
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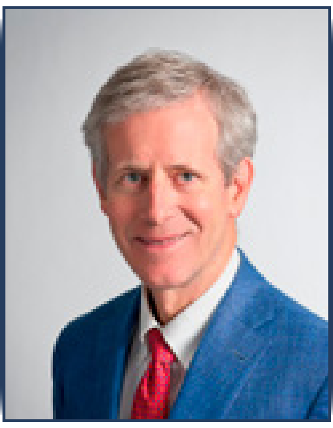

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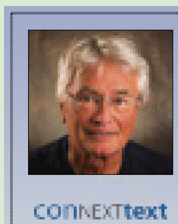

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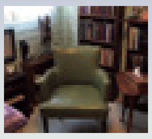

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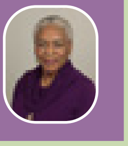

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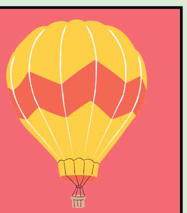

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What's New in the Community

By Lynda Gronlund-Naeem

There are still great things happening in the community!

This ongoing column features upcoming events within Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County and surrounding areas' Body/Mind/Spirit communities, new (during the past year or two) practitioners and holistic businesses, new books written by local/regional authors, new classes, as well as new offerings by established practitioners and holistic businesses.

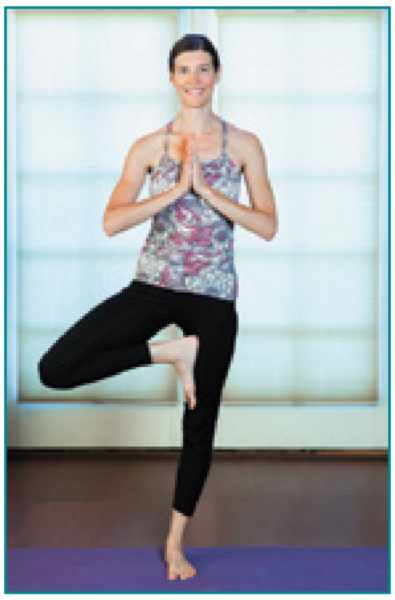
Gateway Farm is Located on Joy Road in Plymouth.

See article on page 28

Gateway Farm Photos by Joni Strickfaden

New Offerings by Established Businesses and Practitioners

Ann Arbor Yoga teacher Christy DeBurton of The Yoga Room is now offering private Yoga sessions for Highly Sensitive People (HSPs).



She explained that about 20% of the population can be considered highly sensitive, meaning they have a personality trait called Sensory Processing Sensitivity. This means they essentially have sensitive nervous systems, picking up on more things in their environment than others. “HSPs tend to be deeply spiritual, creative, and caring,” she said, “but we can also get easily overstimulated and overwhelmed, and we need a lot more down-time than most people.” She explained that self-care is a necessity for HSPs to help regulate their nervous systems, and that Yoga can be a great tool for self-care.

She started offering these sessions during the pandemic over Zoom, but as the weather warms this spring and summer, she will be offering them in person in her beautiful backyard Yoga area. She said that HSPs often feel best in peaceful, quiet surroundings, alone, and/or in nature. Sessions are catered to the individual, are 30 to 75 minutes long depending on the client’s fitness level, schedule, and budget, and DeBurton designs a personalized self-care routine for each person that might include yoga, meditation, and breath-work. She also offers some free resources for HSPs on her website. “I am committed to using my own HSP ‘superpowers’ to help fellow sensitive souls thrive,” she said.

Of her own journey, DeBurton said she had known she was highly sensitive for some time, but a five-year period of her life with an abundance of stressful events had her looking to ramp up her self-care and find out more about HSP. She found an HSP therapist who advised her that she needed two hours of downtime daily. This surprised her, but she came to understand, as another HSP acquaintance told her “an HSP doing nothing is an HSP doing something.” HSPs need unstructured time, she said, to “do whatever the heck we want,” allowing them to “recharge their batteries,” and be “low key and mellow.” She explained that self-compassion is very important, and that a lot of HSPs find validation and comfort in the fact that 20% of the population shares this trait. She said that the most important part of this endeavor for her is to help HSPs feel supported, validated, and not alone.

More information is available on Christy DeBurton’s website, yogaroomannarbor.com. She can be reached by email at info@christydeburton.com. The Yoga Room is located at 889 Honey Creek Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

After 25 years in business, Ann Arbor’s Head to Toe Therapies closed at the end of 2020. Owners Rachel Egherman and Judy Ramsey are continuing their respective practices in new locations.

Ramsey is now a full-time shamanic practitioner and animal communicator, offering interspecies counseling, teaching online classes in both areas, and addressing the spiritual aspects of healing for both animals and people. She said that while the Covid-19 pandemic played a role in closing, both she and Egherman had been “going in a more spiritual direction” for some time anyway. Recovery from Covid-19 shutdowns was difficult, said Ramsey, and the pair felt it was a good opportunity for each of them to pursue their other work in a bigger way.

Ramsey has been practicing animal communication for 15 years, and shamanic work for people and animals for eight. She had been offering these services at the clinic, but with quarantine she started working more and more online. In addition to shamanic counseling and healing, she teaches shamanic practice with what she calls a “very practical, grounded approach.” One issue she specializes in is PTSD, which affects many people who have experienced trauma. She explained that one technique to help with this is called soul retrieval: a calling back of the part of the soul that leaves when trauma happens.

Currently Ramsey works mostly remotely with people and animals, but this spring she will be working with some people in person, in an Amish “tiny house” she has installed in the orchard on the farm where she lives. She will also be able to work with people in their homes, as needed, as the pandemic eases. She said most of her animal work is done remotely since “it’s easier to access an animal’s spirit,” while people tend to have “lots of layers of protection and doubt” built up.

Ramsey believes that with the world in its current state, with rampant fear and anxiety in so many people, shamanic practice can be a big help. It helps people “move forward, bring out their own light, their own joy, and change the world with that; at least their corner of it.” She called it a “very optimistic practice,” and emphasized that it is not in contrast to Christianity or any other religion. In fact, she said, it can only enhance one’s connection to God / Spirit / Source and faith.

Ramsey and Egherman will continue to collaborate on some projects and are planning to lead a retreat together in the fall.

Judy Ramsey’s website is JudyRamsey.net. She can be reached at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com.

Rachel Egherman is now a full-time consultant and teacher of Heart Math to help people find their resilience and joy in life.

Heart Math is a tool that has been around since the 1980s, she explained. It is an evidence-based “toolbox of techniques for self-regulation” including simple breathing techniques. She described it as “a way of accessing our heart’s wisdom in regulating the body.” She started learning about Heart Math, she said, during the leadup to the 2016 election. She had been providing massage and bodywork for over 20 years, but she was seeing the worst pain, anxiety, and stress she had ever seen in her clients. She wanted to offer something more than bodywork to help people. “You can do it anywhere,” she said, even the grocery store. The techniques are simple but have a big effect.

Egherman offers a weekly Zoom call at 12:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays on Heart Math, open to anyone. She asks for a $10 per week or $35 per month contribution, though she will not turn anyone away due to not being able to afford it. She started this in April and said she has a “hardcore group of regulars” along with occasional visitors and new people. She also provides private and group coaching, teaching via phone, skype, or whatever medium is convenient for the client. She offers “heart centered therapy,” which she said uses the body to “track where emotions are and use that to heal.” She considers herself a “self-care junkie” and is self-taught in a variety of additional modalities, intuitively choosing skills that may help any given individual. Her goal is to find what is going to work for a person and have it also be something she/he can easily adopt into one’s routine. She doesn’t want people to be dependent on her, but to learn how to help themselves. She said she loves working in collaboration with doctors and other practitioners as a part of a clients’ healing team. Egherman does offer a free consultation to anyone who is considering working with her.

More information on Heart Math can be found at heartmath.org. Rachel Egherman’s website is at CelebratedHeart.com. She can be reached at 734.834.3223 or through her website.

Touchstone Cohousing, located on the west side of Ann Arbor, recently added four new buildings, containing 12 new homes, to its community.

Resident Mary Gillis explained that availability of homes in the cohousing community is rare, because once people move in, they tend to stay. Touchstone, she said, is built around “intentional community.”

The complex has a playground, community gardens, and a common house containing a mailroom, laundry, kids’ playroom, professional kitchen and dining room where the community can gather and share meals. Parking is located on the perimeter so that “streets” among the houses and shared areas are safe for pedestrians, pets, and children playing. During the pandemic, Gillis said, though they have had to cease meals and get-togethers inside the common house, they have stayed connected with bonfires, outdoor potlucks, zoom happy hour and games, and informal street fairs. Families with young children, retirees, and “everyone in between” live at Touchstone, which is one of three adjacent cohousing communities, and one of only 165 in the United States. Each resident contributes to the community in some way, whether by shoveling snow or mowing grass, cooking common meals, cleaning common areas, making repairs, helping with recycling and composting, serving on committees, even accounting, or event planning.

Explained Gillis: “Living in a close-knit community has been associated with greater resilience to hardship and illness, wider access to resources and support, and increased happiness.” She was drawn here after living in Scio Township on acreage

Continued on page 25

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What's New in the Community

Continued from page 23

for ten years and growing tired of not knowing her neighbors. Entering a new phase of her life as her children had grown up, she was looking for "something different," and has been thrilled with the atmosphere at Touchstone, where she feels she can both benefit from and contribute to the community. She described it as "very supportive of families," and also a "great place to age in place." When she moved in, she said, the first event she attended was a potluck barbeque, and there she immediately made new friends and was invited to tea and to a book club. "People living here are people-oriented and very willing to make friends," she said.

At the time of this writing, about six homes remain for sale. Anyone interested in buying them can arrange a tour by contacting Robin Kahler at (734) 274-9110 or tours@touchstonecohousing.org. Touchstone's website is at touchstonecohousing.org.

The Community Connections Portal (CCP) is an online community gathering place launching this spring.

It is a place for individuals and organizations to connect with one another to provide support in situations of crisis and change in a "values-based, community-oriented way," explained organizer Callan Loo. He said he hopes that the CCP will "revolutionize the way that people and organizations find help in times of major life changes and offer support when they're in a position to do something good for others." The portal is being designed and run by an all-volunteer team from the local area, and several from around the country and world. The intention is for the portal to focus first on the southeast Michigan and northern Ohio areas, where Loo and his team are currently the most connected. As it grows, Loo said he wants to expand first to "liberal, progressive communities" first, and eventually nationwide. He called it the "un-Facebook," and wants it to "redefine what civility means on social media." Each member and organization would sign a code of conduct on agreed-upon rules in order to be able to post.

There will be different levels of privacy for members. So, for example, an individual experiencing addiction and homelessness might post that they are looking for support, but their name and contact information might be hidden except from organizations that are able to offer resources and assistance. The platform will be partly social media, and partly a way for organizations to find people who need their help, and for individuals to find help from those who can provide it.

The Life Transition Zone part of the platform will have a number of categories where people can seek to receive or offer help. Topics like abuse and domestic violence, health crises, addiction, starting a new business, job or career changes, grieving, marriage, divorce, and other major life transitions are included. People can swap stories of their own experiences to support one another, and information about practical help can be shared. Loo said as much as possible he wants the portal to support "real, authentic communications" without the risk of nastiness that so often occurs on mainstream social media like bulling, shaming, doxing, etc. He said that he hopes everyone in the Ann Arbor area who is going through any kind of life change, or supports others with life changes, will become a member.

More information is online at theintentionallivingcollective.org. Callan Loo can be reached by email at contact@the-ilc.org or by phone at 734.660.8622.

On April 8, 2019, someone broke into the 19th century house that contained Grey Fox Floral, Tecumseh Coins, and Michigan Wares.

They stole items from the coin shop and proceeded to burn the building to the ground, destroying everything inside. The crime remains unsolved.

Grey Fox Floral had been in business in Tecumseh for 48 years. Owner, Jan Fox, said that the insurance company wanted her and her husband Gary to settle and not rebuild. They talked about it and decided they loved their businesses and were not ready to retire. They fought for the money they needed to rebuild and won.

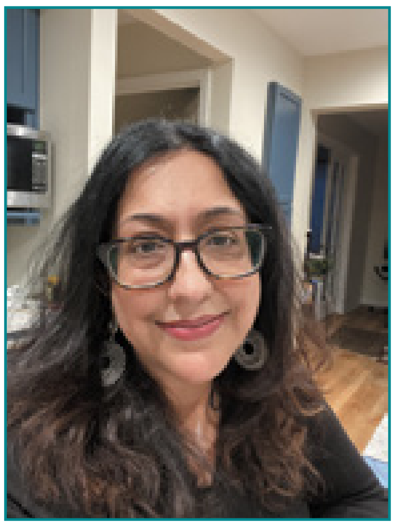
Rebuilding, of course, was not without delays. The businesses were temporarily moved to the old Eagles Club building which was conveniently across the street, though it was much smaller and didn't have much light inside. It took until October 2019 to demolish and clear out the ruined building. It was delayed because asbestos was found in some of the old windows, necessitating costly remediation. They were finally able to reopen in the new space in January of 2020, only to have to close due to the pandemic in March.

The owners again adapted, offering curbside pickup and delivery only until it was deemed safe to reopen to in-person customers. Now, business is picking up again. Fox said that Grey Fox Floral took a major hit during the pandemic closures because much of their business came from weddings, funerals, and church occasions like Easter, none of which were happening, for the most part.

The new building is bright and spacious, and laid out exactly as the owners wanted it. Fox said it's a shopping destination because visitors can shop at all three stores. Tecumseh coins grew out of Gray Fox's passion for collecting coins and he offers ancient through current dated coins, investment coins, and also buys and appraises coins. Michigan Wares houses items from 29 Michigan artists and includes items such as soaps, jewelry, walking sticks, pottery, blankets, décor, original local art, prints, cards and more. Fox said that even though the arson was devastating, in some ways the new building is even better, with a full basement instead of a Michigan cellar, a better layout, and central air conditioning, all of which make it easier and more pleasant to work in. The final step is finishing the 2 upper-level apartments, which Fox said would be ready to rent out in the spring.

Grey Fox Floral, Tecumseh Coins and Michigan Wares are located at 116 South Evans Street, Tecumseh, MI 49286. More information is online at greyfoxfloral.com and michiganwares.com. The shops can be reached by phone at 517.423.3735.

Local meditation coach and teacher Mridu Pasrija has offered classes and private coaching for some time, but in the wake of all the changes the pandemic has wrought she believes it is more important and helpful than ever for people to learn and practice meditation.



She said she has definitely seen an uptick of people who are seeking help with their mental health using this tool. She said that everything in people's lives has been affected, like a rippling-out effect. School closures affect children and parents, working remotely or having to work in-person with new risks, finances are suffering for many people, and keeping one's health and family safe seems harder than ever. This affects people's perception of everything in their lives, and people are depressed, stressed, and anxious. Pasrija explained that meditation and mindfulness are tools that can help people feel more empowered to take care of their mental health, not just at this high-stress time, but throughout one's life to cope with change, as change is constant. To anyone thinking about learning to meditate, she said, benefits include helping with sleep, reducing stress, anxiety and overwhelm, and helping find balance and calm in a busy day. "Dealing with people can throw you off mentally and emotionally," she said, and meditation and mindfulness can help people "connect more to yourself and to self-love, and to lead happier more joyful lives."

It doesn't have to be a big undertaking, for people who are worried that learning this new skill will be too much when they are already struggling with all they need to do. She breaks things down into "bite-sized pieces," and said people can start with just a minute or two a day to focus on their breath.

Mridu Pasrija's website is liveliferadiantly.com and has information about her classes and one-on-one coaching. She can be reached by email at mpasrija@liveliferadiantly.com or by phone at 248.470.5610.

Continued on page 26

enjoy
every
moment
of summer

What's New in the Community

Continued from page 25

New Books by Area Authors

Wixom-based intuition coach Monica Levin published four "oracle card guidebooks" in December of 2020.

The books are designed to "help you receive guidance from your Divine Mind," she said. The four books are *Discovery*, *Affirmations*, *Health*, and *Balance*. Like most oracle card guidebooks, they list a meaning for each card one might draw in any kind of reading, but they are designed to be used with a standard deck of poker cards.

Levin also recently published an online, on-demand class on the Udemy platform called "Intuition Training, Manifesting, and the Body-Soul Bridge." The class covers: how to meditate, how to connect to one's intuition, and receive messages from one's "Divine Mind," how to perform healings, and how to manifest one's desires through thought transformation.

Levin has been teaching people how to connect to their intuition for over 20 years and offers individual and group coaching in-person and virtually. On June 6, she will offer a free one-hour online training to "Strengthen Your Intuition" at 12:00 p.m. She will lead a meditation and demonstrate how to use her oracle card guidebooks.

More information on Monica Levin's books, classes, and coaching, including registration information for her course and training event, are at MonicaLevin.com. She can be reached by phone at 248.656.2505 or by email at monica@nonverbalscience.com.

LITTLE CAT FEELS
LEFT OUT

Adrian author Dori Durbin published her second children's book, *Little Cat Feels Left Out*, on March 2nd.

It is a picture book for ages four through eight and continues with the characters of her first book, *Little Cat Needs Space*.

In the book, Little Cat realizes that her best friend, Dog, has another friend and that maybe she is not Dog's best friend. This leads her to question herself and to ultimately learn how to deal with her friend having other friends. The struggle is common and relatable to children and Durbin hopes that the book will end up in the hands of teachers and social workers as well as children in order to help kids feel they are not alone in their experiences of figuring out friendship. Durbin herself has a master's degree in social work.

Durbin wrote and illustrated the book. She described herself as semi-self-taught and said that she began realizing her dream to create children's books after taking an online course called Make Art That Sells taught by Lila Rogers. Durbin teaches youth art and participates occasionally in arts shows. She is also a certified personal trainer and fitness instructor.

More information about Dori Durbin and her books is online at doridurbin.com. She can be reached via email at hello@doridurbin.com.

In addition to everything else 2020 was, it was also the year that three members of the Harvey family in Ann Arbor became published authors.

Husband and wife Bryon and Jennifer Harvey published their book, *Operation: Thriving Marriage* with Westbow Press in November. Their daughter, 15-year-old Brenda Harvey, published her debut young adult novel *The Conspiracy* in December.

Bryon and Jennifer had been working on their book for about three years. Bryon is an ordained minister who has been working in churches for over 20 years, as well as a 1st Sergeant in the Michigan Air National Guard, a role he said is "100% about taking care of people." Jennifer is an attorney who practices and teaches in several areas of law and said that a big part of what she does involves helping people manage conflict. Both have worked with couples in marriage and pre-marriage counseling through the church. Bryon explained that they tended to see themes in marital conflict and wanted to write this book to help couples navigate them.

One theme they write about is the concept of "team marriage." Usually, said Bryon, when couples argue, they focus on being right or winning the argument. Being a team means that either both partners win, or both lose. This shift in thinking can help spouses look at a problem as a team against a problem rather than warring individuals. Another concept is what the Harveys call "un-expectations," what they define as "unmet, unvoiced, on unreasonable expectations." Successful couples need to be able to manage and talk about these "un-expectations" and convert them into clear and communicated expectations.

Jennifer said that one chapter discusses gender roles. She emphasized that while many people think that the Bible insists on specific, "traditional" gender roles, the book of Ephesians basically says, "Whatever role you're in, do it well, look out for your spouse and look out for your family." Whether those roles are conventional or unconventional, whatever works for the family is good as long as everyone is communicating, open to change, and doing whatever they can to "honor God and move the family forward."

During the publication process, Bryon was deployed on a six-month assignment in the Middle East, so Jennifer was at home managing their two children's schooling through pandemic changes, dealing with her own job, and working with the publisher. They were able to video chat every day, she said, and Bryon said that he was signing the book for colleagues as they ordered them online and their copies arrived before his did. Bryon returned home in January.

Brenda has been writing as a hobby since the second grade. When the pandemic hit, she found she suddenly had more time on her hands, and she wanted to use it to create books for young adults that she would want to read. She said that most young adult books available are intensely focused on "over-the-top" violence and / or romance, and she felt authors focus on these themes because they believe that is what sells. Brenda contends that given options teens are just as varied in their tastes as adults.

The Conspiracy is the first of a trilogy. It centers around Iris, a young woman who is kidnapped by the Order of Olympus, but then learns this group is actually fighting against another group, the Aesop Alliance, that is actively working to destroy the world. Iris, Jennifer said, is a strong, decisive woman who knows what she wants. She is a martial artist and trains warriors. Brenda earned her black belt in Tang Soo Do in early 2020 and this influence, said Jennifer, is clear in her writing.

The Conspiracy *is published through Amazon Kindle Direct and can be purchased as an e-book or a print copy. The second book in the trilogy will come out in late May.* Operation: Thriving Marriage *can be purchased wherever books are sold. The Harvey family can be reached via email at Bryon.d.harvey@gmail.com.*

New Classes

Spiritual healer and teacher Eve Wilson is enrolling students for her next Healing & Ascension Certification Course, which will be the first she has offered in two years.

She said she is "really excited because each time I teach this, I get to update everything to where we are at in the ascension process on earth and how to teach things at the new level. In essence, it is always a new class."

The course is approved by the United Church of the Master (UMC), an organization that offers certification and legal protection to spiritual healers. It is recognized throughout the United States and will soon be recognized in Canada. Currently, said Wilson, the class is about half full. She is seeking to fill it with eight to ten students in total and will start and schedule the class to begin when it is full, working with students to determine a convenient meeting time for all. It meets every other week for 14 months. Wilson has two class assistants, so each student gets a lot of individual attention, she said.

Wilson has been teaching versions of this class since 1986 and has certified many healers in that time. She said she has developed a good process of intuitively determining who is meant to do this work and will make a quality healer. She said that learning starts with self-healing, and goes on to "unifying with higher selves,"

Continued on page 28

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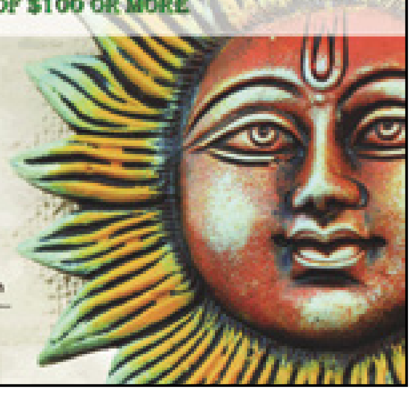

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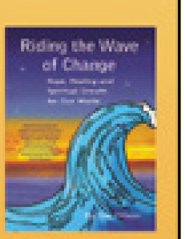
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What's New in the Community

Continued from page 26

using intuition, working on fellow students, working with humans and pets, and ultimately doing world ascension work. Participants "gain through experience a deep connection to their inner wisdom and higher selves." This class, and work, is designed for people who have a particular set of natural abilities and who have it in their soul contracts to do it.

Anyone interested in knowing more about the Healing & Ascension Course can email Eve Wilson at evew@spiritualhealers.com. Her website is spiritualhealers.com.

New Practitioners and Businesses

Hannah Kanter, LMSW, RYT finished a two-year post-graduate fellowship in ambulatory psychology at the University of Michigan in December of 2020 and is now in private practice, accepting clients for one-on-one psychotherapy.

She is also a mindfulness teacher, yoga instructor, energy worker and Reiki practitioner who uses these tools to help her therapy clients. Her specialties include perinatal issues (fertility and birth, working with both moms and dads), anxiety disorders including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, dual diagnosis, and substance use disorders. Currently she is working 100% virtually. She said her goal is to help clients learn to love themselves and find and use the interventions that can help them manage their mental health conditions. In addition to psychotherapy, she does offer mindfulness coaching, energy healing sessions, and mindfulness groups. She said that "a lot of anxiety and depression starts on a spiritual level," and she strongly supports a "mind-body-spirit approach." She likes to help people "gain skills to be quiet within themselves and connect with higher wisdom," and to "love themselves on physical, emotional, and spiritual levels."

Hannah Kanter offers a free 20-minute phone consultation. Her website is healignwithhannah.com and she can be reached at healingwithhannah@gmail.com or 734.489.9023.

Gateway Farm in Plymouth started in 2017.

Mary Emmett, who has owned Plymouth Orchards and Cider Mill since 1977, purchased the former driving range with a vision to create a community-oriented, organic farm. The land had sat unused for about four years, which made the process of USDA organic recognition straightforward since the rule is that pesticides cannot have been used on the land in at least three years. The farm offers a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, online orders, an honor system farm stand (purchase vegetables anytime day or night on the honor system), farmers markets, events, classes, and workshops. It partners with a variety of organizations including St. Joseph Health System, Grow Eastern Market, and others to get fresh organic produce to as many people in the community as possible.

Zoe Arvantis, the farm's "Community, Commerce & Culture Ambassador," said that it focuses on "nutrient-dense, ecologically regenerative, diversified vegetable and permaculture farm[ing]." It operates year-round using season-extending hoop houses, though classes and workshops are concentrated in April through October. One of the first events of the season will be the plant sale on May 8th, in collaboration with other nearby farms, featuring garden transplants, native plants, spring flower bouquets, and more. On May 15th the farm will offer a container gardening workshop, created with "city dwellers, apartment renters, and low-maintenance gardeners in mind." Containers, soil, seedlings, and seeds are included with the class to get participants started. More classes and workshops on organic gardening, composting, permaculture design, and other topics will be scheduled throughout the season.

Said Arvantis, "We are on a mission to supply our community, and surrounding communities, with the highest quality, most nutrient dense produce we can offer." Some of her favorites include the farm's many varieties of tomatoes, and its hardy greens, kale and lettuce. She noted that though Michigan does not support the full growing season of ginger, the farm is able to offer "fresh, vibrant, young ginger." Produce orders are available through the end of December, she said. "As a farmer, wintertime is a very introspective and reflective time for planning crops, buying seeds, and [for Gateway] to work on having robust offerings for the community for workshops and other events." She emphasized that "we're really working to make this a community space. That has always been part of the vision, to make it an educational space. It is a farm, and we want to provide people with quality food, but we also want to help people learn how to get in touch with their environment and learn skills."

Gateway Farm is located at 10540 Joy Road, Plymouth, MI 48198. More information is online at gatewayfarmplymouth.com. They can be reached by email at info@gatewayfarmplymouth.com or by phone at 810.354.5154.

Transformational Intuitive Guide, Coach, and Energy Healer, Noel Kemeny, is now practicing out of her Plymouth office as well as virtually.

Noel holds a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology. She explained that transitioning to a Coach, Guide, and Energy Healer allows her to engage with her clients in a more holistic process that involves a deep dive into the soul coupled with energy healing techniques. The heart of her work lies in working with each client to excavate and unpack all that they are not (limiting beliefs, core wounds, self-sabotage, self-betrayal) and then reconnecting them to their soul's authentic truth, gifts, and joy. She specializes in guiding her clients toward the discovery of their soul's medicine—what she describes as their soul's wisdom and divine blueprint. She is a Reiki Master and explained that combining coaching with energy work is a very powerful way to help people integrate healing into all of their layers—the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual.

Noel explained that this process is not for the faint of heart, and that her ideal clients are those who are committed to the deep inner work that is required. She states that "The beautiful byproducts of this journey are stepping into alignment with your highest potential and creating a fulfilling life that you love as the next greatest version of yourself." She works with her clients to cultivate radical self-love, acceptance, and empowerment as well as teaching them how to go inward to their heart space and trust their intuition. She offers energy healing as part of the coaching process or as a stand alone service.

She is an intuitive empath and often receives guidance from Spirit to help guide her clients. She said that "sometimes loved ones who have passed come through to offer their love and support."

Noel offers a free 30 minute consult to those who are interested in working with her. You can learn more about her and her offerings at noelkemeny.com and she can be reached at noelkemeny@yahoo.com.

Submit your listing for the September through December 2021 issue.

Please note that the "What's New in the Community" column is part of the editorial (not paid-for-advertising) part of the CW Journal, and the editors may or may not include what you submit. Whether the editors include material or not will depend on space considerations, as well as other editorial issues, such as the need for high resolution jpgs and the overall mix of stories included in the "What's New in the Community" column in a given issue. If you would like to submit information to be considered for this column, please email communitynews@crazywisdom.net, or drop off or mail information to the store: What's New in the Community, 114 South Main, Ann Arbor, MI, 48104. The firm deadline for submissions for the next issue (September through December 2021) is July 1, 2021.

• Healers of Ann Arbor •

Acupuncture with Dr. Cynthia Esseichick

By Laura K. Cowan

You can try a new type of massage or read a chiropractor's online reviews, but how do you really know when a healing modality is right for you? Columnist Laura K. Cowan goes in depth with local healers to give you a behind-the-scenes look at what they really do to help people relax and heal.

Acupuncture. It's one of the least understood of the alternative medicine modalities, partly because many people are nervous of needles, and partly because Chinese medicine is a complex art. But, many people who try acupuncture swear by it. For this edition of Healers of Ann Arbor, I wondered if we could get to the bottom of what acupuncture is best for—more specifically than, you know, everything, which is what people who love acupuncture will tell you.

Dr. Cynthia Esseichick is a well-respected acupuncturist and Chinese medicine practitioner in Ann Arbor, who graciously allowed me to ask questions from a place of ignorance. As many alternative modalities as I've tried for chronic pain issues over the years, acupuncture was never on the list. I'm not sure why, other than no one ever could answer my questions ahead of time that I was able to ask Dr. Esseichick. I hope this saves you some time and trouble if you've been considering acupuncture for a health complaint. I wish you swift healing and peace.

* * *

> Many people who try acupuncture swear by it.

Laura Cowan: Okay so first up, what about the needles? Many people avoid acupuncture because of a fear of needles.

Dr. Cynthia Esseichick: People often are intimidated by acupuncture, because they think "needles" and their only association is with large hypodermic needles. Acupuncture is super relaxing. Most patients fall asleep or feel super zoned out during treatment. You could fit 15 acupuncture needles in a hypodermic needle.

Laura Cowan: Really! I think that might make a lot of people feel more comfortable about trying acupuncture.

Dr. Cynthia Esseichick: Yes. Acupuncture needles are hair fine. We don't needle into veins or nerves.

> Acupuncture needles are hair fine.

Laura Cowan: What is acupuncture best used for?

Dr. Cynthia Esseichick: Acupuncture is ideally used as preventative medicine. It can be part of self-care to maintain health and wellness. Life being what it is, people get sick, injured, or experience stressful periods of time. Acupuncture is a wonderful support if you are stressed. It can be used pre- and post-surgery. It's supportive and palliative if you're given a serious diagnosis.

Acupuncture can also be extraordinarily helpful for inflammation, because needles are inserted where large numbers of nerve bundles can tap in. The primary response is to calm the nervous system.

LC: For what complaints do people most often come to your office?

CE: Pain is one of the main things that draws people to acupuncture. Through receiving acupuncture, taking Chinese herbs, and trying cupping, people's pain can go away, and they have a new lease on life. Orthopedic issues are [also a] common [complaint] I see, and also fertility challenges.

LC: How does acupuncture work? How does it help with pain or fertility issues?

CE: Acupuncture takes people from [a state of] fight or flight to rest and digest. Often people find themselves stuck in a chronic [heightened] immune, allergic, or other hyper-alert state. People aren't satisfied with just dulling that and gaining weight or feeling groggy. For day to day, there's a gentler way to work with the nervous system. I see people's lives transformed.

LC: Are there contraindications?

CE: Herbs are one thing I'm extremely careful with. So many people are medicated for everything. I need to be careful with dosing and interactions. There are ways of stimulating the body with gentle heat or acupressure if someone is more sensitive. In other words, there are ways to treat the body using the principles of Chinese medicine using the meridians [without the herbs].

LC: How did you get into this line of work? What makes you love it?

CE: I came to acupuncture as a patient. As a teenager I sustained a number of fairly serious injuries—neck, back pain, migraines on a daily basis. My family doctor told me to toughen up because life was painful, and it would get worse. My best friend said, "talk to my mom, who is studying acupuncture and Chinese medicine."

LC: What do you wish people knew about acupuncture?

CE: That you can combine acupuncture with other treatments to help before and after surgery, for example, or combine IVF hormones with acupuncture for better outcomes.

LC: Are there situations where you alter the treatment?

CE: Every treatment is customized for the patient. Cancer patients going through chemo are exhausted and fragile. I change how many needles I use, and how long they stay in the body. [A cancer patient's time with the needles] will be shorter than for a marathon runner.

LC: How do you diagnose patients to determine what kind of treatment they need?

CE: Observation is key. I use a pulse diagnosis: 18 primary positions and additional measurements taken at the left wrist (nine positions) and right wrist (nine positions). I'm feeling for specific things in the body. Also, we use the tongue for diagnosis: the shape, color, texture, cracks or coating. It sounds kind of silly, but with masks this year, I have patients take a tongue selfie with their phone and send it to me. I listen to people's voice intensity and watch how bright their eyes are. Some people's eyes are missing something versus someone whose eyes are shining. People with the same complaint can be three constitutionally different people.

LC: What goes into determining the ideal number of sessions?

CE: That depends on what people's goals are. For an acute injury: one to two visits. A chronic issue: 3-10 visits plus more for other issues. I'm not treating knee pain, for example. I'm looking at the person with issues that have manifested as knee pain. This sets acupuncture apart from allopathic medicine. Acupuncture is like changing the oil in your car. You don't do it once: it's about maintaining balance. That's what I wish people knew. People will sometimes say I tried acupuncture once and it didn't work. It's not a one-time fix and everything's done. People come in for one thing and end up as lifers, though that might be a repeat visit some years later, and not every week.

LC: What can people do along with acupuncture to improve outcomes?

CE: Diet and lifestyle changes. If people come in with pain but don't make other changes, the results aren't as long lasting.

LC: Are there conditions you treat that might surprise people?

CE: I treat almost anything health and wellness related: stress and anxiety as well as orthopedic pain and reproductive issues. That's part of what I love about the medicine. It's remarkable how supportive it can be. It also works with all ages. I'm not seeing as many seniors this year because of the pandemic, and that makes me sad. I check people's temperature before they come into my office . We have air filters and have been vigilant about cleaning, but people are understandably concerned. Still, this medicine is ideally suited to this time because it supports the immune system.

LC: How can someone know if a particular acupuncturist is right for them?

CE: It's important to contact a licensed, board-certified practitioner, because some people are [only] partially trained. Have a conversation with them about your goals, because not everybody treats every condition. You want a rapport and someone on the same team with you to treat your needs.

> Acupuncture takes people from
> [a state of] fight or flight to rest and digest.

To learn more about Dr. Cynthia Esseichick, DACM, and her work, you can visit a2healingarts.wordpress.com. Dr. Esseichick has an office in Ann Arbor, and another in Brighton.

* * *

LEAPS OF FAITH

TALES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

By Laurel Hogge

This column is a look at a brave soul who took a leap of faith to open her own business. This is a business owner following her dreams and thriving despite the odds—and Covid.

This That, and the ODDer Things

Claire Broderick — Owner
50 Cross Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
Open Saturday 12-7 p.m. Sunday 12-5 p.m.
https://odderthings.business.site

Claire Broderick waited with the world, trying to grasp the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic. Even though she wanted so badly for 2020 to be the year she would manifest her dream of opening a retail shop filled with her collection of what she calls “uniquities,” there was reason to pause.

In the meantime, she kept dreaming, researching, and collecting. Adding a taxidermy octopus here, reaching out to a bone jeweler there. She knew how important it was to persist and keep planning.

As a professional hair stylist for 14 years, Broderick built a solid clientele in a trendy Ann Arbor salon. She told me how much she loved it there, but added, “I’ve always wanted to have a business local to Ypsilanti and Depot Town especially because it has been my neighborhood for over 14 years.” If any community was willing to embrace a business called This That & the ODDer Things (emphasis on the ODD), it would be Depot Town.

In the meantime, she kept dreaming, researching, and collecting. Adding a taxidermy octopus here, reaching out to a bone jeweler there. She knew how important it was to persist and keep planning.

So, when I asked if there had been any lucky breaks that may have only happened because of Covid, she explained that a space in Depot Town opened up when Michigan closed down. The previous owner likely had to make the difficult decision to lock the doors when everyone was ordered to stay home.

The space remained empty for months before Broderick took a look inside. What she saw was the perfect fit for her salon/store concept. Her creative wheels started turning and she could see the transformation — the wood floors, the fresh paint, the new sign on the window — that would house her vision. She could even imagine a bookshelf in the back of the store that would secretly lead to her salon.

It was perfect. Broderick made the decision to move forward. She signed the lease and used her down time to renovate and set up the shop so it would be ready when people started venturing out more. To answer my question she adds, “So in some respects the whole thing is lucky because of Covid. I don’t know if it was the best time, but it was the right time for me to pull my pieces together and make the dream happen once and for all.”

As Michigan eased up restrictions on businesses, Covid loomed. We were also just beginning to realize the collective impact the pandemic was having on mental and emotional health. Having recently lost a number of close friends, family, and beloved pets, Broderick knew the importance of staying connected and keeping spirits up. Now that her shop and salon were in place, she needed to solve the issue of safety. One dear friend lost his life to the Covid virus, so she felt a particular responsibility to keep her customers safe.

Broderick also felt it was important that people could relax and feel comfortable in the refuge she created for them. Her creativity again kicked in as she went about addressing the need for air circulation. She decided to convert her back patio into a place for outdoor professional hair care. By adding an enclosure with good air circulation, she could heat it to a cozy temperature in the winter. This, along with keeping masks on, made Broderick and her hair clients more comfortable. She adds that this temporary fix will likely be a permanent feature and that “This was the best Covid related win, because I’m thrilled to work outside, and my people love it!”

Although she found a work-around for the salon, traffic in the retail side of her store was slow to pick up. Broderick found that “with the deep winter season and Covid putting restaurants down for the count, we did not have a wildly successful holiday season. That was not a full surprise, but definitely one, nonetheless. Retail is supposed to make a huge percentage of sales during the holiday season.”

Broderick’s passion for embracing the unconventional has led her to create a shop that entertains and charms those who wander through it.

WATER UNSAFE
ALL ARE

Setbacks are something Broderick knows how to deal with by now. The life experiences that broke her down were the same ones that make her a resilient and determined business owner. And she is encouraged by the immediate support of the Ypsilanti community, saying that "On a positive note, the most unexpected thing was how welcoming and well received my store was. I am so grateful to all of those who connect with my store. The art, the humor, and the fun in there are all an extension of my home, my friends, and my demented mind. It's an extension of myself and I am so thrilled to have the support I have been shown ten-fold with its opening."

When asked about her demographic, she responds "I feel my main demographic is women from teens into their 60's. The store attracts people with an alternative style. They're lovers of the dark and macabre, but with a sense of humor about it. A lot of dudes love the store also and find it to be a great place for gifts."

Setbacks are something Broderick knows how to deal with by now. The life experiences that broke her down were the same ones that make her a resilient and determined business owner.

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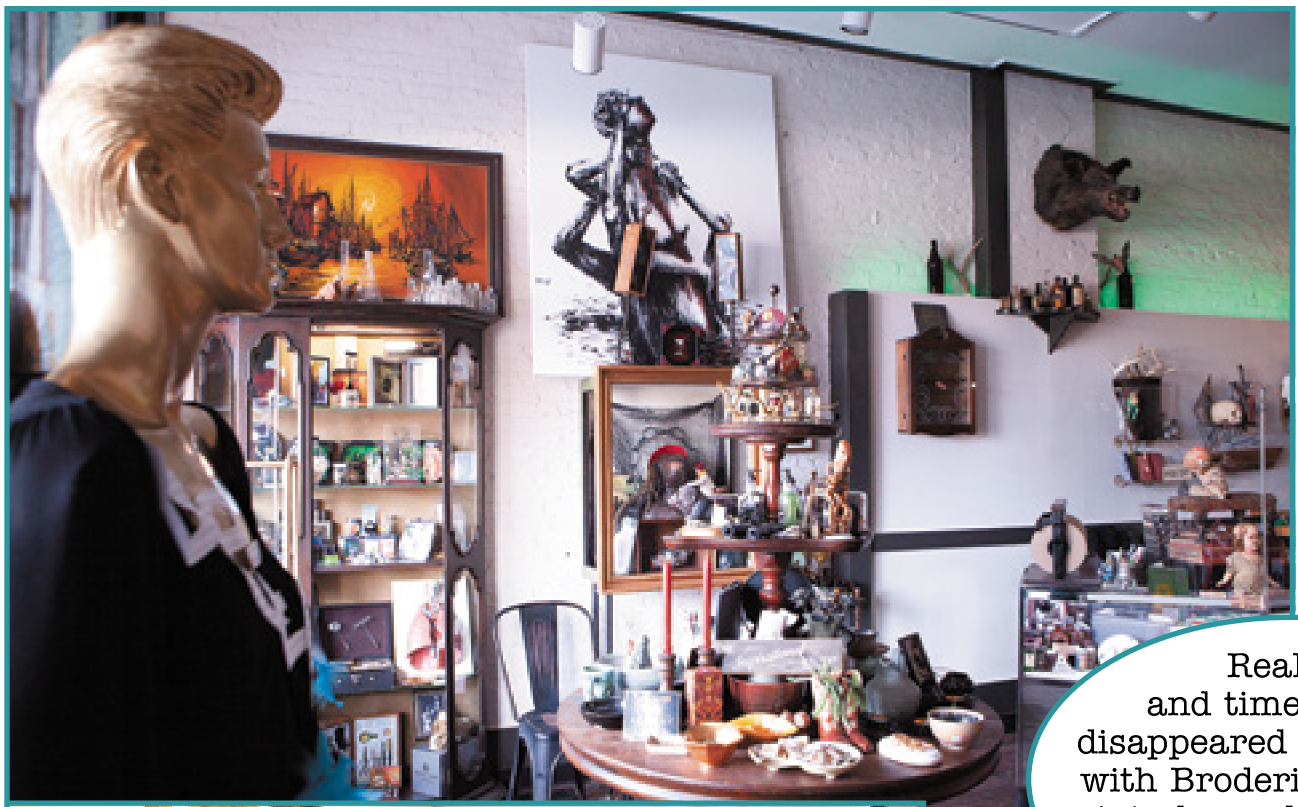
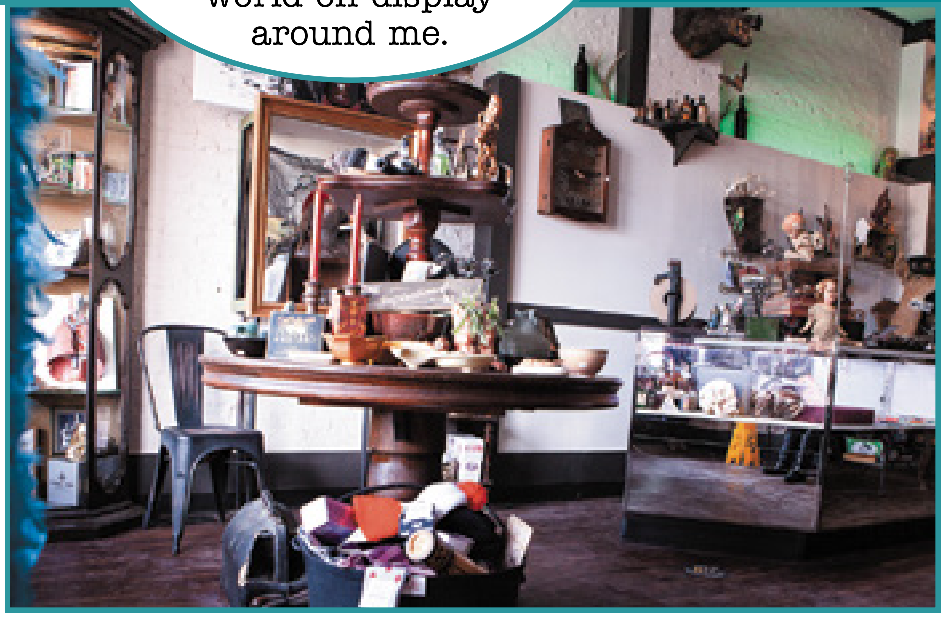


Reality and time sort of disappeared when I was with Broderick, peeking into her eclectic inner world on display around me.



Not only is it a great place for gifts. It's a great place for exploring items you're not likely to see anywhere else. Broderick's passion for embracing the unconventional has led her to create a shop that entertains and charms those who wander through it. Her approach is to "work all angles to find wonderful gifts and fun items for people to enjoy. I have a focus on emotional and practical use and aim to excite."

It is exciting to shop at This That & the ODDer Things. Between interview questions I inspected the jarring expression on the stuffed chimpanzee in the front window, rifled through the top-selling assorted socks that are held in a genuine, made in Michigan, iron witch cauldron, and admired the jewelry display. I notice an aesthetically arranged group of vintage apothecary glasses next to a human skull named "Lucy," and wonder to myself how on earth Broderick came to find not one, but two human skulls to include in her collection. I decided maybe I don't want to know.

One thing I did learn is that Broderick has likeminded connections throughout the world who share her enthusiasm for the bizarre. Collaboration and a natural ability to find what she needs seem to be key. Every item has a back story and a human connection, and every display is well thought out to perfectly curate the eye candy that makes up this store.

I asked what keeps her going even with so many challenges. Her answer is no surprise. She tells me, "It's just what I do. I am creative and motivated. I don't always do the hard work just for myself. I often will join forces and help build others around me. I want to make sure I can pay my employees, give support to my community, and share with the artists. I also have a way of life for myself I personally want to achieve." And as the world opens again to travel, Broderick will achieve her goal of traveling far and wide to add to her already diverse collection.

She hopes that as people begin to get out more, they will discover that This That & the ODDer Things is a safe place to temporarily ease their worries about the pandemic and life in general. I noticed for myself that reality and time sort of disappeared when I was with Broderick, peeking into her eclectic inner world on display around me. And she has her demographic pegged, because I found the perfect gifts for my daughter's upcoming 15th birthday along with a beautiful cluster of crystals for myself. I was grateful to have something to bring the unique energy of this shop and its owner along with me.

Local Food, Safety Precautions, and Friendly Faces:

How the Ann Arbor Farmers Market Survived (and Continues to Thrive) During the Year of Covid

By Angela Madaras

I first met Stefanie Stauffer, Manager for the Ann Arbor Farmers Market, while picking up food at Argus Farm Stop. I had seen her at local food events, but this was our first “hello.” I asked her if she was interested in talking about the virus and how the market has handled the challenges. Luckily, she agreed. We later had a Zoom meeting and began carving out slices of topics the public seemed curious to know. Both of us have similar backgrounds. We run small farms as well as have a vested interest in serving all people in our area with healthy, reasonably-priced food grown and produced in our own communities. Her smile and positive attitude eased my mind on the current state of affairs with the market and its vendors. The Ann Arbor Farmers Market shifted into a twice-a-week destination to purchase local food, plants, and arts and crafts. I have been a market enthusiast for many years starting in the mid-eighties when I began shopping and cooking for myself, friends, and family. Saturday morning rituals included a walk to the market with baskets and bags that I would fill with the freshest ingredients for a week of produce-packed indulgences. I feel very lucky to have the many local markets in our area from which to support our local food, plant, and art economy.

I was concerned last spring that the markets would not be able to open with a pandemic in tow. The following interview eased my worries and helped me understand how it worked in 2020 and is continuing to thrive in 2021 and hopefully, well beyond.

Angela Madaras: Stefanie how did you and your team, including Parks and Recreation and the market vendors, create a Covid-safe environment for the Ann Arbor Farmers Market in 2020?

Stefanie Stauffer: We instituted changes like installing hand washing sinks, converting walkways into one-way traffic, closing our bathrooms to the public and putting up portable toilets instead, offering curbside pick-up for pre-orders, and creating a walk-up window for people to purchase credit card and SNAP/EBT tokens. We also instituted a mask mandate for vendors and customers and added more staff to help guide people through the new safety protocols.

Ann Arbor
farmers market
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PARK CLOSED MIDNIGHT TO 6AM
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Angela Madaras: How long was the market closed? Did you have to open back up in stages?

Stefanie Stauffer: The market was closed from when the Governor’s order first came down in March until May nineteenth or so. We re-opened first as curbside only and re-opened for on-site shopping the end of May. Although we are an essential food service, we closed to be able to formulate a plan to re-open and stay open safely. It had a negative impact on some of our vendors that have early spring items like plants for sale, but we reimbursed vendors for their stall fees during the time we were closed to lessen the [financial] impact.

> *The Ann Arbor Farmers Market has shifted into a twice a week destination to purchase local food, plants, and arts and crafts.*

Angela Madaras: I know you just started your job as market manager in June 2020. Were you in training or involved in some of the earlier conversations which started mid-March? It might help to explain what you were doing prior to running the market.

Stefanie Stauffer: During the hiring process, I was involved somewhat in brainstorming strategies for re-opening. As part of the process, I had to give a presentation about what I would do to help re-open safely and remain open. I am also a vegetable farmer, so prior to the pandemic I had been navigating selling our products at the new online Ypsilanti Farmers Markets, as well as at Argus Farm Stop in Ann Arbor.

I have over twelve years of experience in our local food system as a grower, producer, educator, advocate, consultant, activist, and mentor. I have been a vendor at the Ypsilanti Farmers Markets for ten years and for over three years I managed Tilian Farm Development Center, an incubator for beginning farmers that was located in Ann Arbor Township. I am a former member of the Greenbelt Advisory Commission, former board member of the Ypsilanti Food Co-op, and a current board member for Growing Hope. In 2013, I completed my PhD in Sociology at UCSB on the topic of local food movements in Michigan and California. Since 2015, I have taught the Sociology of Race and Ethnic Relations at Washtenaw Community College, with an emphasis on food sovereignty and environmental justice movements. I also have spoken widely on topics such as food justice, land preservation, zoning, land access, value-added food production, season extension technology, heirloom vegetable varieties, and seed saving. In 2014, I attended Slow Food’s Terra Madre convergence in Torino, Italy as a delegate representing Michigan family farmers and producers. As an Italian-American with deep ancestral roots in farming, markets, and restaurants, that event was a special type of homecoming that strengthened my commitment to heirloom varieties and expanding access to culturally-appropriate food.

> *Although we are an essential food service, we closed to be able to formulate a plan to re-open and stay open safely.*

Angela Madaras: Did you lose vendors due to Covid, in the sense they felt nervous? Did any vendors get Covid? If so did it affect the market? Did any staffers or volunteers get Covid?

Stefanie Stauffer: We did not lose any vendors, although we had a few that

delayed their start due to concerns about the virus. No market staff got the virus, and we did not take on any volunteers this season due to our desire to reduce the amount of people our staff came into contact with. We had five instances of vendors or their staff being exposed to or testing positive for Covid. Three of those instances happened after the vendor had been at market last so there was no possibility for community spread, although those vendors did quarantine, or were already done for the season. The two others quarantined immediately and did not return to market until they received negative tests. We have been very fortunate to not be disrupted by the virus much other than the initial shutdown.

Angela Madaras: I was very impressed with the sanitation stalls with running water, soap, hand sanitizers, gloves, and masks available for those who came without. Were you the only market with these tools or did others use the same tactics?

Stefanie Stauffer: Those sinks were designed and built by the Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation department. The Michigan Farmers Market Association recommended that markets install hand sanitizing stations as part of their Covid safety plan, but they did not specify the type.

Angela Madaras: Explain how the Parks and Recreation department help operate your market and do they cover other area markets? If not, who is responsible for the operation of all Washtenaw county farmers markets? Explain this system to our readers. Do you and the other managers meet regularly and share ideas? Do vendors have a say in the matters?

Stefanie Stauffer: The Ann Arbor Farmers Market is a City of Ann Arbor park and I am an employee of the Parks and Recreation Department. We are the only market that the City of Ann Arbor operates. Each market in Washtenaw County is different. Some are run by non-profits, some are run by businesses, some are run by municipalities, and some are run by the vendors supported by community members. We try to meet regularly with other market managers from around the county. I can't speak to what the other markets offer, but our market has a Public Market Advisory Commission that meets monthly and is made up of vendor representatives and community members and all our meetings are open to the public.

Angela Madaras: What has been the feedback from shoppers, vendors, and community members?

Stefanie Stauffer: We have had overwhelmingly positive feedback from vendors, shoppers, and community members who continue to thank us for being open during the pandemic and that we remain open.

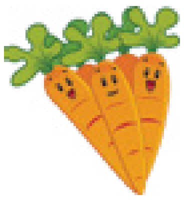
Angela Madaras: What is your vision for the spring and summer farmers market? How many vendors do you see selling? Will they offer online sales and will you offer some type of no-contact pick up for those who are at risk? Is there a delivery option for home-bound folks?

Stefanie Stauffer: We have 120 vendors on our full roster, and we anticipate having our usual number of vendors throughout the season. That means 75-80 vendors per market on Saturday in the high season and 40-50 vendors per market on a Wednesday in the high season. Our winter market was strong with 25-30 vendors each Saturday. We also plan on continuing the curbside pick-up for pre-orders option for those requiring a no contact shopping experience. The market itself does not have the ability for delivery, but there may be some farms that can when people place their orders with them directly. Additionally, many of our vendors sell at Argus Farm Stop as well, and they are offering delivery options.

Angela Madaras: Will the food truck nights make a comeback? And will there be a couple warm-prepared food items available from vendors? Will there be seating areas?

Stefanie Stauffer: We hope to resume our Food Truck rallies this year, but it is too early at this point to make that decision. We currently have a few vendors offering warm-prepared foods, and have food trucks join us sometimes on regular market days. It is too early to make a decision about designated seating areas in the market, but there are picnic tables adjacent to our market.

Angela Madaras: I know you do not have a crystal ball…but if you did, what would the Saturday and Wednesday markets look like if Covid seems somewhat under control?



> We have had overwhelmingly positive feedback from vendors, shoppers, and community members who continue to thank us for being open during the pandemic and that we remain open.

Stefanie Stauffer: For the foreseeable future, we are moving forward with our distancing and other safety measures in place.

Angela Madaras: What are your personal goals for the market this spring and summer and into 2022?

Stefanie Stauffer: My immediate goal is to keep the market open for a safe, outdoor shopping experience. My short-term goal is to expand the array of product offerings at market, including more plant-based items. My long-term goal is to recruit more farmers of color, women farmers, queer farmers, and farmers from other historically marginalized communities so our market can better reflect our broader community. It is also important to me to support as many black-owned businesses as possible.

Well that about sums it up. No fears about finding the growers, makers, and talented hard-working folks who line the walkways of the market every week. You have the online ordering and pick up options if you find that best. Many farms offer online ordering with no contact pick up on market days. Some of them have delivery options as well. Either way, the Ann Arbor Farmers Market is open and waiting for you to partake!

Market hours May through December are Saturday and Wednesday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Winter market hours, January through April are Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visit a2gov.org/market for more information.

Great Tastes in Local Food

By Crysta Coburn • Photography by Rachel Everheart

DRIP HOUSE
coffee co.

DRIP HOUSE COFFEE CO.

I think we can all agree that 2020 was a tough year to launch a new business, especially one in food service with limited indoor seating. But if my visit to Ann Arbor's new coffee shop Drip House is any indication, it is still possible to flourish.

It was a chilly, albeit sunny, afternoon in January when my husband and I dropped by for a warm beverage and a snack. Drip House is located in the sweet spot between Michigan Stadium and Pioneer High School, conveniently on the way to several local destinations. With indoor seating still verboten for another couple of weeks, we had to take our food to-go or sit in the outdoor seating area, equipped with an open-sided tent and heat lamps.

> Drip House is located in the sweet spot between Michigan Stadium and Pioneer High School, conveniently on the way to several local destinations.

Because it wasn't crowded (yet), we chose to stick around and picked a table on the edge of the tent in the warm sunshine. There was a couple at a nearby table on their respective laptops, a typical coffee house activity in the before times. Yes, we were outside and all wearing masks, but I took this as a sign that some sense of normalcy was returning to Ann Arbor.

In adition to fresh coffee, Drip House serves organic smoothies and tea. Neither my husband nor I actually bought a coffee! (Though it smelled amazing.) I opted for a *delicious* matcha latte, and he ordered the signature Military Drip, which consisted of matcha (powdered green tea), espresso, vanilla syrup, cocoa powder, and milk. I was honestly surprised that such a combination was indeed tasty. Bravo, Drip House! You clearly know your stuff.

As for food, there are a number of vegan and gluten free options in addition to the conventional pastries you often find in cafes. I ordered gluten free avocado toast with lox. (The default bread is sourdough.) It was actually more food than I was expecting; two slices of bread rather than the single slice that I am used to from other establishments. And they did not skimp on the avocado or the lox! This was such a satisfying, healthy little meal. My husband enjoyed his chocolate croissant, too. Drip House also serves both sweet and savory crepes.

I'm not currently working downtown, but I can absolutely see myself one day, in the future when more businesses have reopened, stopping by Drip House for some avocado toast and a latte on my way into town. I often make use of the park-and-ride across the street, and I imagine this being a perfect morning. I suspect Drip House will be popular with the kids at Pioneer, too, as well as football game attendees when they return.

Drip House Coffee Co. is located at 1336 South Main Street in Ann Arbor. They are open Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, visit driphousecoffee.com or call (734) 800-4135.

BELLFLOWER RESTAURANT

Bellflower Restaurant opened in downtown Ypsilanti at the end of August in 2020. I learned of it from friends who took advantage of the patio dining to celebrate their wedding anniversary. When indoor dining was closed during Michigan's pause to curb pandemic numbers, and the weather turned chilly, Bellflower quickly innovated by offering complete dinners-to-go, an all-day sandwich menu, a wide selection of bottles of wine, and kits for you to make cocktails at home called cocktails-to-go. They also collaborated with nearby Go! Ice Cream to create a special dessert, Sticky Molasses Pudding with Tiger Tail ice cream.

For Mardis Gras, they offered a New Orleans-themed feast-to-go (with or without wine) which included an entire King Cake (complete with "baby") for dessert. Tragically, I was not able to partake because the King Cake was not gluten free, and my husband is not a fan of seafood, so no crawfish etouffeé or Hot Deviled Crab Dip for me.

Instead, we took advantage of the sandwich menu. Since I did not see a gluten-free alternative to the house-made milk bread, I contacted Bellflower to see if I had options. I was told that any sandwich can be made as a rice

After finishing eating with my husband, I wasted no time in telling my mother about this new place that she had to try.

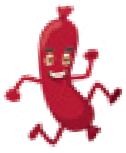
bowl instead, however, many of the sandwiches do involve breaded ingredients, and the same fryer is used for both breaded and non-breaded items. The chicken boudin (a kind of sausage) was suggested as my best option as it spends the least amount of time in the fryer.

I was very happy with this choice. The boudin was not spicy, as one might expect from a Louisiana sausage, but rather slightly sweet and packed with flavor. I think it was the best sausage I have ever eaten. The bath in the fryer gave it a lovely crispness that a grill alone cannot accomplish. The slices were arrayed in a circle around a bed of rice topped with shredded lettuce, thinly cut onion, pickle slices, and a few cuts of tomato. The flavors all went well together, as they would have on a sandwich, and I was left pleasantly full. Alongside the rice bowl was a bag of Great Lakes Parmesan Ranch potato chips and a glass of Malbec wine.

My husband enjoyed his Fried Pork Collar Sandwich, noting that it was surprisingly tender. He wasn't so sure about the chocolate chunk rye cookie that he ordered for dessert, however, describing it as someone making a cookie out of pumpernickel bread. It was "more scone than cookie" in texture, which he admitted wasn't terrible, it just wasn't what he expected from a cookie. So, if you are a pumpernickel fan, you may not want to skip this unique dessert item.

As of this writing, Bellflower plans to reopen table service in early March with a new spring menu.

Bellflower is located at 209 Pearl Street in Ypsilanti. For more information, including current open hours, visit bellflowerypsi.com or call (734) 896-0599. If you enjoy beautiful pictures of food, be sure to follow their Instagram @ bellflowerypsi.



The boudin was not spicy, as one might expect from a Louisiana sausage, but rather slightly sweet and packed with flavor.

JAGGED FORK

One of Ann Arbor's latest brunch spots, the Jagged Fork, had just opened its doors before Michigan shut down in March of 2020. (The Jagged Fork is a small Michigan-based group of restaurants with four other Metro Detroit locations. Ann Arbor is the most recent.)

I am delighted that they have weathered the storm. Not only is there an array of mouthwatering classic breakfast items like pancakes, French toast, and waffles, but each one has a gluten free option! I was able to enjoy delicious gluten-free pancakes with berry compote and cream cheese frosting on top. There are also sweet and savory crepes, five varieties of Eggs Benedict, endless combinations of omelets, skillets, and more.

For lunch, you can choose between several different burgers, sandwiches, and salads. The sides are varied and include healthier options, such as fruit or avocado, and indulgent choices, like six different varieties of fries. (Those Animal Fries sound awfully familiar to this former California resident….)

Jagged Fork serves Lavazza coffee, which is an old Italian brand at which my husband (a bit of a coffee snob) normally turns up his nose. But, he very much enjoyed the cappuccino he ordered from Jagged Fork, often exclaiming in befuddlement that he couldn't believe how good it was. I was also pleased with my caramel latte that paired excellently with pancakes.

Because I am a big fan of corned beef hash, I also ordered it as a side just to try. It is a meat-heavy hash with a lot of good flavor. I ended up having it for lunch the next day with eggs because I wanted something to absorb some of that pungency.

At the time we ordered, Jagged Fork was only offering delivery and pick-up, including curbside, which we found very convenient as we live outside of the delivery area. I had some tasks to do in downtown Ann Arbor, so we ordered ahead of time for a noon pick-up, and while I was finishing up my errand, my husband grabbed our food. He was surprised how quickly they brought it out after he called the number to let them know he was there.

In the before times, when my mother would come to visit from West Michigan, we often went out for brunch together. After finishing eating with my husband, I wasted no time in telling my mother about this new place that she had to try. I look forward to safely dining out again and continuing this brunching tradition with my mom. In the meantime, I would definitely take advantage of Jagged Fork's curbside pickup again, and I've already spread the word to my friends.

The Jagged Fork is located at 414 South Main Street in Ann Arbor. They are open Monday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, visit www.thejaggedfork.com or email info@ thejaggedfork.com.

Necessity Grows Innovative Farming in Our Own Backyard

By Angela Madaras

In the beginning of 2020, the world came to a crushing halt. With supply chains broken and store shelves empty, pandemic-fearing locals wanted to stock up on seeds to grow their own food in case they would be unable to import or truck food into our area. By chance, our area went into isolation mode in mid-March 2020, right when farms start planting seedlings in nurseries, the ground, and in hoop houses. All living organisms start from seed, whether a thought, inspiration, or a physical seed created from a plant to grow a new plant. The seed is where my interest starts for this interview with Ann Arbor Seed Company owner-farmer Eric Kampe. I have been buying their seeds for some years because I appreciated the open-pollinated, heirloom, and climate-appropriate vegetable varieties sold in local stores and online. The seeds come in clear plastic re-sealable bags, instead of paper envelopes, so one can see the amount, size, and quality of the product.

All living organisms start from seed, whether a thought, inspiration, or a physical seed created from a plant to grow a new plant.

What were once three businesses, Ann Arbor Seed Company, Green Things Farm, and the Land Loom, is now one: Green Things Farm Collective. They came together in 2020, as their website explains, “to expand production, share the management of running a diverse farm business, and develop a model of sustainable, cooperative, and responsible farming.”

Small-scale regenerative farming is a business unlike any other in its bias toward diversity of product, consideration of ecological systems, personal touch, and community capital over efficiency, scalability, and profit at any cost. As a whole truly greater than the sum of its parts, Green Things Farm Collective and the community it serves stand to benefit greatly from the forty plus years of diverse farming experience among the Collective’s working members, and the innovation and inspired vision only possible when a group of passionate farmers come together to share in the joys and challenges of their calling.

Eric Kampe is one of the five farmers who operate individual agriculture businesses together as The Green Things Farm Collective on 100 acres of aged farmland. The soil is challenged as old school style large-scale farming practices over time leached the organic matter, leaving hard clay that does not hold water or nutrients. Because the Collective wanted to run a responsible, organic, and no till farm, they had to put their minds and bodies to work to find ways to feed the soil naturally, while at the same time producing healthy food and ornamentals from which seeds could be saved.

The necessity was clear, but the way to make it happen was unclear. It took a year of hard work to get their business ready for online ordering (which most farmers were not doing until Covid-19) and increase CSA memberships, retail sales, and market sales. Kampe was already selling seeds online and in local retail shops. Thanks to his past work as a computer engineer that part was easy, but not as joy filled. However, these talents placed him at an advantage to most other small agriculture businesses.

I have been buying their seeds for some years because I appreciated the open pollinated, heirloom, and climate appropriate vegetable varieties sold in local stores and online.

Kampe began his seed company in 2012 and joined his farmer friends in the collective known as Green Things Farm Collective in 2020. Kampe’s main interest is soil health and saving the highest quality open-pollinated, organic seeds. He ensures the best quality seeds are saved for their farm and for the seed business sales. This is great for seed buyers who want to grow their own garden and save their own seeds. A home gardener can eventually save enough of their own seeds to become almost self sufficient in the garden arena. In the event one just wants to buy fresh produce, flowers, and beef from the collective, a share to fit their individual family needs with a variety of shares, prices, and amounts can be purchased, or they can purchase at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market and other retail venues in Ann Arbor like Argus and Agricole. The pre-paid CSA shares are picked up by the customers with no contact, making it as safe as possible. They follow all safety protocols and rules to protect the plants and people. I wanted to pick Kampe’s brain because I had read and heard such great things about the farmers and this rare farm business model (rare for our area, but actually ancient and practiced all over the world).

Angela Madaras: Eric what brought you back to Michigan and farming-seed saving after working as a computer engineer?

Eric Kampe: I came from an outdoor loving family where I enjoyed completing daily tasks and working the soil with my hands and hand tools. There is satisfaction in eating a plant I started from a seed that we saved from the past year’s crops.

Angela Madaras: How did you connect with your other four partners? And why did you decide to combine efforts to purchase 100 acres to farm, especially considering the land would take many years to regenerate? Please explain how each business supports the other.

Eric Kampe: I started by volunteering, and eventually working for, an organic farm in Colorado called Abbondanza, which is Italian for abundance. It was there I learned all about seed saving, which caught my heart. My wife Meredith Kahn, and I moved back “home” to Michigan and began our farm on a three quarter an acre rented plot with the goal of saving seeds in 2012. The act of farming is a full time, seven days a week, ten to fifteen hour a day, year-round job which could be simplified by sharing the tasks with others of the same mindset. So, a group of five of us met through farming events, beer meetings, and sharing meals. From there we decided to co-farm 100 acres with each of us focused on our best skills while supporting the whole.

Kampe’s main interest is soil health and saving the highest quality open pollinated, organic seeds.

Kale
'Red Russian'
Brassica napus
200 seeds
Ann Arbor Seed Co.
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Spinach
'Bloomsdale Longstanding'
Spinacia oleracea
300 seeds
Ann Arbor Seed Co.
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Kale
Brassica oleracea
150 seeds
Ann Arbor Seed Co.
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Angela Madaras: Explain your particular way or style of seed saving.

Eric Kampe: All our plants are open pollinated, which means they are pollinated by wind, insects, and birds. We raise our own seeds from the plants we grow to sell as food or for ornamentals. Each year we hone-in on the best of each crop. We grow a small selection of mostly heirloom plants and sell enough varieties of seeds for

Eric Kampe, owner of Ann Arbor Seed Co.

> Each year we hone-in on the best of each crop. We grow a small selection of mostly heirloom plants and sell enough varieties of seeds for a person's backyard garden.
>
> — Eric Kampe

a person's backyard garden. Enriching the soil with manure, compost, and mineral amendments allows us to create healthier soil, plants, animals, and seeds.

Angela Madaras: The seed business began for you in 2012, then turned into the collective endeavor in 2020. Did you experience any up sides in your business with Covid-19 now that local food has become more popular due to fear of imports, and a stronger desire for many Arborites to support local food businesses? Has this shown up in higher sales?

Eric Kampe: There are no upsides to Covid-19's destruction and loss of human lives, but it did push us to grow more, and our sales did hit an all time high in 2020. Our CSA memberships grew to 100 fall CSA members and market sales, smaller share sales, and boutique style on site farm sales.

Angela Madaras: What is your plan for future growth or expansion? Or are you happy where things are currently?

Eric Kampe: We want to grow our business, reach more locals, and improve our current collective. We are expanding vegetable fields. We can only grow as fast as we are able to feed and improve the soil. This takes a lot of work and time. We are mindful of how we treat our soil, as that is the base of all our activities in farming. We want to leave this place better than we found it.

Ann Arbor Seeds and Green Things Farm Collective are laying groundwork for our community and contributing to the growth of our local food system in positive ways. If you are interested in growing food for your family, I encourage you to purchase seeds soon, as seed sales are higher than they have been. I love that our food centric, land-loving group of citizens are trying to clean up the planet and our own bodies, minds, and spirits, one seed and one person at a time.

Ann Arbor
Seed Co.

To learn more about the Ann Arbor Seed Company visit a2seed.com. They are located at 3825 Nixon Road in Ann Arbor. You can also visit the Green Things Farm Collective online to learn more about the CSA membership options at greenthingsfarm.com/memberships.

TEA TIME WITH PEGGY

Tea - More Than a Drink!

By Peggy Alaniz

Spring and summer happen to be my two favorite seasons. I enjoy spending time playing in the dirt. My herb and flower gardens are my happy places and I have been known to spend hours out in my garden rearranging plants to a better location and even mowing the lawn. Unfortunately, too much time in the sun results in a nice sunburn. I know of nothing more miserable in the summer than being burnt to a crisp. While sipping a nice, iced glass of sun tea doesn't help you cool down the sting, the wet tea bags will.

Tea is not just for drinking. After brewing your sun tea, save those tea bags and use them on your sunburn. If you are into the loose-leaf tea (which is really the best) you can also make a cooling bath. Black, Green, and Chamomile tea are the most beneficial in helping to reduce the sting and inflammation.

Green and black teas contain antioxidants, and their benefits go beyond drinking and digestion. The tea can be used topically to help reduce the inflammation of a burn. The antioxidants will help to support the natural healing process.

Chamomile tea not only has a calming effect on the body when you ingest it but will help to calm the inflammation of a nasty burn. However, if you have an allergy to pollen, I wouldn't suggest using it since it can actually aggravate your already inflamed skin.

In order to treat the burn, you can use your tea of choice and make a small bowl of tea. Once cooled, wet a washcloth with the tea then place it upon the affected area. You can also take a bath in the tea, but keep in mind that most tubs are porcelain or fiberglass—both are porous materials and, like your teeth, can stain easily.

I also suggest using the tea bags that you made the tea bath with as a cold compress upon the burnt area. Once the tea bags have been used allow them to cool. You can even place them in a bowl in the fridge, just remember to leave some of the water in the bag so that they stay moist. Some tea bags are compostable. If they are not, you can always cut them open and use the tea from inside. Loose leaf tea drinkers will be a step ahead because you just need to empty the infuser. So, what can you use all those loose tea leaves for? Remember the garden I mentioned at the beginning of the article? Guess what I fertilize it with?

Since spring and summer tend to be iced tea season, here are my recommendations for my fellow tea drinkers. First, hibiscus tea infused with a fruit flavor makes terrific, sweet tea. I am not a fan of sugar in my tea unless it happens to be hibiscus tea. The tart flavor of hibiscus pairs well with a sweetener such as sugar or honey. I would even go as far as suggesting that you use it to make ice cubes and add them to a glass of regular iced tea or lemonade. It will add a bit of summer flavor to your favorite drink. Second, make a simple syrup infusing it with hibiscus tea and then pair it with a tart fruit flavor like raspberry. To make a simple syrup use equal parts water and sugar. For a nice alternative to canned soda, take a quarter cup of the simple syrup, some of those tea ice cubes, a little bit of lime juice (about half of a fresh squeezed one) and some sparkling water. Good luck staying cool this summer and remember your tea is good for more than just a refreshing beverage!

Peggy A. Alaniz is a tea enthusiast and former employee of Celestial Seasonings Tea in Boulder, Colorado.

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Friends Lake Cooperative Community
A Nature-Based and Spiritual Sanctuary

Photo by Davy Rothbart

By Ann Rosegrant Alvarez

Places that hold great spiritual energy and history have a special feel to them. For decades, it has been our family practice to pause and open our windows when we turn onto the dirt road that leads into the Friends Lake Cooperative Community. This is partly to inhale the smell of the pine trees near the entrance, and partly to feel the spirit of the place, and the immediate sense of refuge and relaxation it brings us.

FRIENDS LAKE
A Warm Welcome to our Membership Community
All members and guests please sign in and pay guest fees at kiosk.
Visitors arriving without a member please see caretaker.
Members and guests, kindly review the guidelines.
ENJOY YOUR STAY!

Photo by Susan Ayer

For decades, it has been our family practice to pause and open our windows when we turn onto the dirt road that leads into the Friends Lake Cooperative Community.

As we drive slowly down the lane, we pass the meadow on our right. The open field features a huge tree near one end, a fitting focal point for a ceremony or ritual. Just past that, the Michigan Friends Center appears on our left. We continue on, past the campground, down the winding slope, until we end up in the parking lot, at the end of the road. From here, we get out and walk between modest cabins, add our names to the sign-in sheet, and head into the open area bordered by a brick pizza oven, firepit, play structure, sauna, and a lakeside log cabin with boating equipment. Picnic tables dot the grassy area, and the children's beach, boats, and dock edge the lakeshore.

If it's summer, we leave our things on a picnic table and head over to the adult swim area. Some of us swim the length of the lake and sun lazily on one of two rafts afterward. Others poke around in the shallows, riding "noodles" and bobbing with the water's movement. Ahhhhh! Friends Lake! We breathe deeply, and feel muscles relax and tension seep away. If kids are with us, some of us linger with them at the children's beach area. This small, shallow area has a sandbox on shore, and endlessly fascinating fish come right up to the children–it's hard to know which group stares harder at the other! Later, we eat what we brought and chat with other visitors to the lake, and when we head homeward again, it is with lighter hearts and spirits, and the sense of being refreshed and rejuvenated.

This small, shallow area has a sandbox on shore, and endlessly fascinating fish come right up to the children–it's hard to know which group stares harder at the other!

Friends Lake is actually the shorthand name for Friends Lake Cooperative Community (FLCC), set on the shore of Long Lake, a little northwest of Chelsea but still in Washtenaw County, and adjacent to Waterloo State Recreation Area land. Members feel very fortunate to have access to this natural resource and space without having to drive several hours "up north." As its website explains, "Friends Lake Cooperative Community is owned and operated cooperatively by its members. The name reflects its origin when a group of Quaker families bought 70 acres in 1961. Two years later they started this cooperative community, emphasizing simplicity, ecology, and caring. It was created for persons of every faith and color, a serene setting for harmony with nature where the joy of life is celebrated and where decision-making reflects a search for spirit-led action."

Photo by Barbara Brodsky

The original Articles of Incorporation, filed in March of 1963, were signed by eight people important in the Ann Arbor community and beyond: Robert Blood, Elise and Kenneth Boulding, Johan Eliot, Herman Frinkle, Eldon Hamm, Benton Meeks, Peter Wenck, and Claudia Winder. Longtime Ann Arborites will recognize many of these names. Johan Eliot, for example, was medical director of Planned Parenthood in Ann Arbor, and a physician at the Ann Arbor Free People's Clinic. Like other founders, both Bouldings were devoted members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), and both were prominent peace activists. In fact, Elise Boulding is sometimes referred to as the "Matriarch of Peace and Conflict Studies." The Bouldings secured the property by making the initial purchase, with plans in place for repayment from the community. The plan included capitalization from the lease of cabin sites and homesites on the property; several cabins are still scattered along an interior road, owned and maintained by committed FLCC members. In the mid-80s, FLCC officially became a "cooperative," a structure and language that aptly reflect the ways members interact with one another and FLCC.

More than 50 years after its beginning, FLCC retains the same values, with an emphasis on natural simplicity and community. Formerly leased homesites that dot the perimeter of the property are now owned by the homeowners, who have been stalwart stewards of FLCC over the years, and the now more than 70 contiguous acres encompass great biodiversity, including lakeshore, meadow, marsh, and forested areas. While the lake and the water are the main draw for many members, others are drawn to the camping, and there are plenty of options for those who focus on forest bathing.

Unlike a membership at a typical summer lake or swim club, the FLCC membership term includes access to the lake and land over the entire year and during all seasons—a huge asset during these constrained pandemic times. In 2020, new and returning members combined added up to more than a 50% increase in membership numbers. This is likely due in large part to people's need for a place to be away from home, out in nature, and with clear Covid-related protocols, and no large crowds.

Many members view FLCC as an idyllic haven. Cassie Cammann, a longtime member and Friend, succinctly sums of the value of FLCC as, "The opportunity to be in nature, in water, and in community." It is not for everyone, though. FLCC has no paid staff, and each member is expected to contribute four hours of labor to the community per year, or to pay in lieu of that work. Members participate on committees, do physical work to maintain and improve the property and facilities, plan programs, and staff the board. Decision-making is grounded in the Quaker approach of finding the "sense of the meeting." Unlike at local public beaches, there is no large sandy beach for sunning, and the swimmer or wader is met with typical lake flora and fauna, including water lilies, fish, and turtles. There is no running water on the property except at the Michigan Friends Center, and buildings, including a few very basic outhouses, are the epitome of "rustic." There is no smoking, no alcohol in community areas, and no loud music (or Zoom meetings!). While dogs are welcome at FLCC, leashes are required or encouraged, depending on time and place. The property has been designated a wildlife preserve, and there is no sport fishing, and no fishing at all from shore or docks. Children are encouraged to observe and learn about fishes, snails, turtles, birds, caterpillars, fireflies, and any other living creatures—but not to handle or collect them. The focus is on maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, within which everyone can enjoy peace and natural beauty. For some people, this all conjures up images of a heavenly retreat.

The original vision of FLCC founding members included a lodge where people could meet for worship, recreation, or educational programs. This part of the vision was actualized when the Michigan Friends Center (MFC) was built near the entrance on FLCC land, following a 1992 agreement between FLCC and Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting. While MFC and FLCC are separate entities, they maintain a close and reciprocal relationship. MFC members and programs make use of FLCC land and facilities, and FLCC members attend programs at MFC, where many FLCC meetings—including board meetings—are also held. Their boards are separate, but many people have served on both, and have strong ties to each organization. The beautiful and peaceful space at MFC, enhanced by its natural setting, is used for conferences, retreats, meetings, and other gatherings. Past programs at FLCC and/or MFC have included potlucks and fire circles at the beach, mindfulness walks, discussion of poetry of nature and spirit, singalongs with local folksinger duo Gemini, and winter gatherings with sledding and skating on the frozen lake.

During the last Bird Walk and Count led by Juliet Berger, Natural Area Preservation Ornithologist and President of the Washtenaw Audubon Society, in June 2019, Berger and the group identified 45 species of birds in two hours including the Hooded Warbler, a State of Michigan Listed Species of Special Concern. Birds listed last year include Acadian Flycatcher, Wood Thrush, Barred Owl, Bald Eagle, Scarlet Tanager, and a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers! Early and late in the day, the lovely and strange calls of weirdly prehistoric-looking Sandhill Cranes float over the lake.

Longtime members Pam and Phil Hoffer are Friends who have enjoyed the beauty and peace of Friends Lake for decades with their daughters, and now their grandchildren. Hoffer shares the following:

> I grew up allowed to wander alone for hours in a vast wood in Dover, Massachusetts. It was a huge blessing. When I first came to Friends Lake, I saw a similar wood for our kids to feel safe in, to wander in, to know, to climb the same kind of white pines I did. And with swimming, to boot! Joining was a no-brainer. We have been members since 1979... sharing grunt work on property as well as committee work on membership, [and] organizational work as President and Secretary. Special pleasures: walking in these woods in all seasons, having learned to swim distances unafraid, and now the joy of grandkids having learned the forest paths so well they know where they are in every part. And still my favorite: shared grunt labor with others who love this place. I do think the shared sweat on work projects makes for the glue that binds us together and gets us through [difficult] …times…

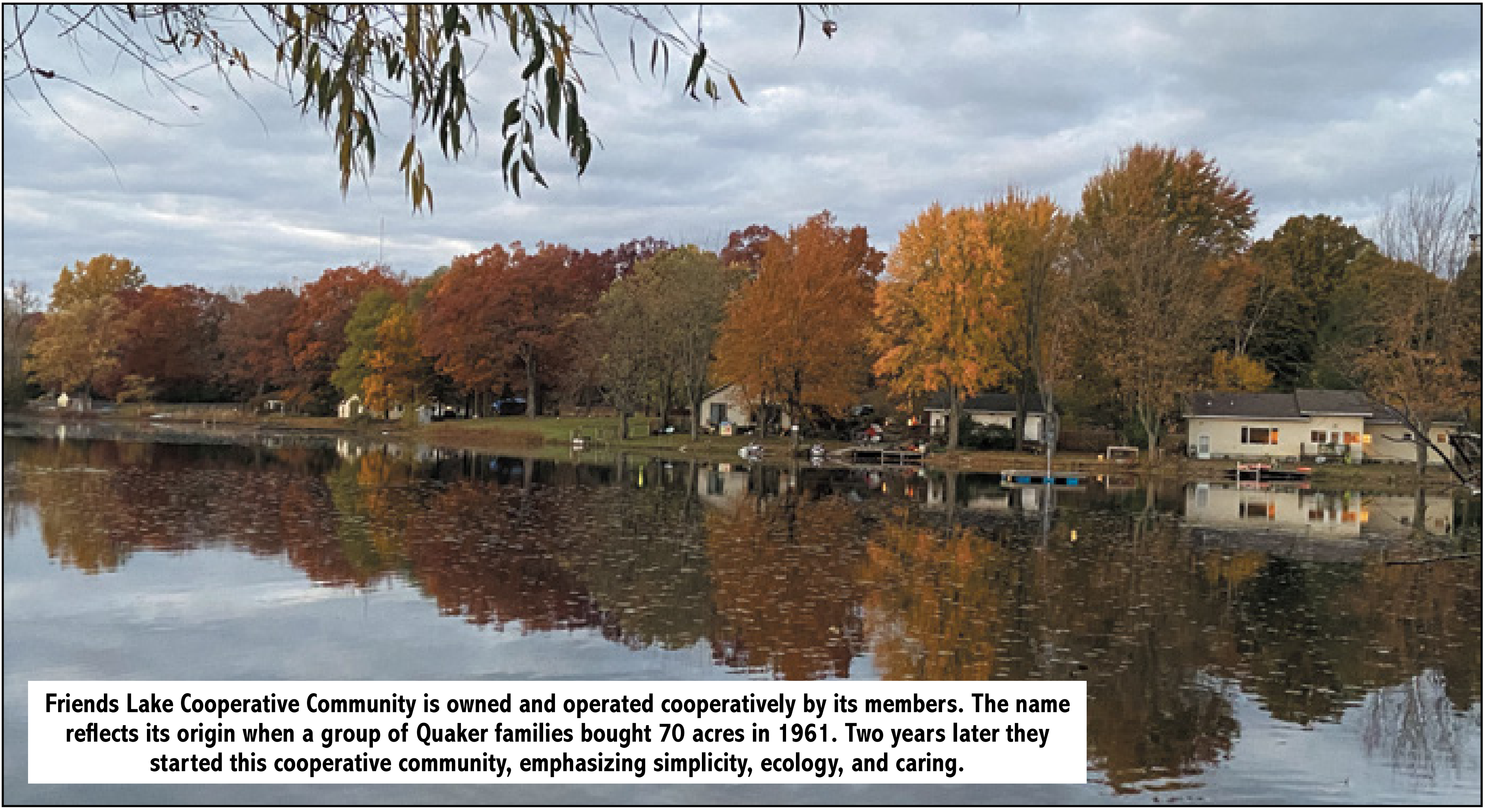
Hoffer adds a quote from Albert Schweitzer that she feels captures the spirit of Friends Lake:

"By having a reverence for life, we enter into a spiritual relationship with the world. By practicing a reverence for life, we become good, deep, and alive."

While there are definite commonalities and areas of overlap, different people have varied perceptions of FLCC, and different ways of expressing what most resonates with them. Richard Tucker, currently the Clerk of the Michigan Friends Center,

Continued on next page

Photo by Susan Ayer



Friends Lake Cooperative Community is owned and operated cooperatively by its members. The name reflects its origin when a group of Quaker families bought 70 acres in 1961. Two years later they started this cooperative community, emphasizing simplicity, ecology, and caring.

Friends Lake Cooperative Community

Continued from previous page

is a recent past-President of FLCC, environmental historian, and self-identified "amateur landscape ecologist." A member at FLCC since 1966, he emphasizes its land stewardship aspects—an awareness of the responsibility for preserving the unspoiled natural setting and beauty, while managing the resources responsibly. In our interview, Tucker focused on opportunities for environmental education. He described an extensive report done for a U-M Master's project on how a voluntary community manages its resources, which had two major dimensions: a detailed biological study of the resources, and consideration of how FLCC manages them. Tucker shared that what he most values about FLCC is the opportunity to experience "collective solidarity and ways to relax together in a natural setting with great variety and fascinating history, where we can engage with the issues of environment and climate that challenge us."

Photo by Barbara Brodsky

While the lake and the water are the main draw for many members, others are drawn to the camping, and there are plenty of options for those who focus on forest bathing.

Tucker also referenced the contribution of Amanda Klain, a seasonal botanist for MNFI (Michigan Natural Features Inventory). Klain has worked professionally with the flora of Michigan since 2006 and did a plant inventory of FLCC during 2016-2018. She identified 253 species of trees, shrubs, vines, forbs (herbaceous plants), ferns, grasses, and sedges, including a White Lady's Slipper—a state-threatened orchid—found just past FLCC boundaries.

Barbara Brodsky is well-known to readers of the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal. Founder of Deep Spring Center, she is an author and meditation teacher who channels the sprit Aaron. She and her husband, Hal, have been members at FLCC since 1969, and their three children—Mike, Davy, and Peter—grew up spending summers at the lake, first camping, and later in their cabin. Interviewed for this article, Brodsky painted a beautiful word picture of the peaceful energy at the lake, and of sitting on the dock watching sunrise and sunset. She emphasized two central aspects of FLCC: the duality of the opportunities for both solitude and community, and the value of the four-season availability. "I love the summer there, but the other seasons are also really beautiful and worth cherishing… [including] the exquisite beauty … in the spring, when the first things are shooting up out of the ground, and the wildflowers are beginning to show, before the woods close in."

Unlike a membership at a typical summer lake or swim club, the FLCC membership term includes access to the lake and land over the entire year and during all seasons—a huge asset during these constrained pandemic times.

Newcomers to FLCC are as enthusiastic as longtimers. Jake Osburn and his partner, Billy Kelley, who joined just last summer, say, "We love it out there!" Kelley is a postdoctoral student in chemical engineering at U-M, and Osburn directs the ProStart program for the Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association Educational Foundation, teaching culinary and hospitality arts to students in high school and correction facilities. Osburn and Kelley live in a loft above Agricole, in Chelsea, and

Photo by Davy Rothbart

While there are definite commonalities and areas of overlap, different people have varied perceptions of FLCC, and different ways of expressing what most resonates with them.

Photo by Shawnna Biondo-Savin

Photo by Joshua Mayer

are thrilled to consider FLCC their "lakefront back yard"—helping them expand their world during isolating times. They love biking to the lake to escape to nature, thankful that they "stumbled upon this hidden gem," and have enjoyed feeling welcomed into the community, after "craving that connectivity" to nature and people. Osburn emphasizes that they really appreciated "meeting like-minded people, where they could keep their distance and feel safe."

Photo by Davy Rothbart

Another newcomer is local activist and photographer Susie Ayer. Editor and publisher of the Washtenaw Jewish News for 27 years until her retirement, Ayer is no stranger to community process. Her three children graduated from Community High, and she is a founding member of Touchstone Cohousing. Part of what she appreciates most about FLCC is that "Less than 30 minutes from home I can be at this amazing nature area with a beautiful lake to swim and boat in, and be able to hike, and be with other people who also enjoy that kind of beauty." She enjoys the multigenerational interaction, and the fact that facilities are cared for by the community, so that she "doesn't have to be the one taking care of everything and can also give back to the community in a meaningful way that makes other people's lives easier in some ways." Ayer has found a natural home at FLCC, where she is a welcoming and anchoring presence on shore, on rafts, and in meetings.

Photo by Susan Ayer

> **I love the summer there, but the other seasons are also really beautiful and worth cherishing… [including] the exquisite beauty … in the spring, when the first things are shooting up out of the ground, and the wildflowers are beginning to show, before the woods close in."**
>
> **— Barbara Brodsky**

Friends Lake Cooperative Community welcomes as members all who will support its principles and guidelines and contribute positively to the community. Most members now are not Quakers, although Quaker values are still critical to the FLCC perspective on land and community. Most current members live in the Chelsea or Ann Arbor areas, and range in age from newborns to those in their 90s. FLCC hopes that more people will be spirit-led to seek out this accessible beauty and peace, and to participate in this long-lasting and committed community.

FLCC is open to members only, and you will need to make arrangements to visit as a prospective member. Interested? Contact Ann Alvarez, annra.new@gmail.com, or check out the FLCC website, friendslake.org. FLCC actively welcomes and seeks BIPOC and LGBTQ members.

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Life Force:

Discovering Invisible Allies Outside Your Door

By S. K. Rosina Newton

As the sun moves higher in the sky, warming our bones and our soil, we might find ourselves more frequently drawn outside. We venture into our personal landscapes just outside the door, onto the trails of our neighborhood park, or even Nichols Arboretum, looking for more signs of life emerging from the earth.

What is our personal connection with this green world outside? Some of us have started a spring vegetable garden, some of us hike or play regularly in the wild, and some of us might not know anything about plants—we just know what looks beautiful to us or how good we feel after spending time outdoors.

Having a yard—our little corner of Earth—is a great opportunity. What we do here reflects our creativity, as well as our understanding of nature. Our home's landscape is a microcosm of the huge subject we call *the environment*. Our choices here can have surprising effects on our own health and on our greater environment as well.

Soon after graduating from Texas A&M University, with a horticulture degree under my belt, I mentioned to a fellow agriculture graduate that I wanted to use organic fertilizers. My friend said, “That plant can't tell the difference between a nitrogen molecule that comes from an organic fertilizer and a nitrogen molecule that comes from a synthetic!” At the time I didn't know enough to have a comeback; my alma mater didn't teach organic horticulture back then. Now, after 30 years “in the field” in Texas, New York, and now Michigan, I've learned there is so much more than meets the eye when we are talking about plants.

> There is a soil food web happening under our feet, too.

John Muir wrote in *My First Summer in the Sierra*, “When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe.” We know that “life is all connected,” but what does that truly mean? To try and answer that, let's start at the beginning: all of life on earth depends on plants. Plants are called *producers* because they can take the sun's light energy and—through the miracle of photosynthesis—turn it into food for themselves. Every living thing on earth depends on this primary food energy from plants.

Remember the food web that we learned about in school? The plant is breakfast for a caterpillar; a bird eats the caterpillar; and a fox eats the bird. There is also a *soil food web* happening under our feet, too. In *Teaming with Microbes,* authors Jeff Lowenfels and Wayne Lewis say, “A mere teaspoon of good garden soil … contains a billion invisible bacteria, several yards of equally invisible fungal hyphae, several thousand protozoa, and a few dozen nematodes.”

In the wild—whether in the Amazon rain forest or a temperate forest in Michigan—a healthy ecosystem has its own sustainable system of fertility, pest, and disease control and maintenance. Leaves fall, animals and microbes defecate, and plants and animals die. The microorganisms living throughout the soil consume these ingredients in the process of decomposition, turning them into available fertility for the plants. The final product of decomposition is what we call organic matter. This, mixed with the broken-down native bedrock, is the recipe for soil.

> Microbes in our gut are “involved in many other important processes besides just the act of digestion—including your metabolism, body weight, and immune regulation, as well as your brain functions and mood.”
>
> —Rachel Kanaan, cofounder of Unity Vibration Kombucha

In other words, there is no need for a human being to go into the wild jungles with a bag of fertilizer and bug spray to maintain the plants. In native ecosystems around the world, there are connections between plants and microbial life that perform all the functions necessary to keep the vegetation going and to keep pests in check. Only in recent decades has science really begun to discover the true extent of these complex plant-microbe relationships.

Some of these discoveries about plant-microbe relationships seem to be straight out of a science fiction story. In his 2015 book *The Hidden Life of Trees,* Peter Wohlleben echoes what Lowenfels says, “There are more life forms in a handful of forest soil than there are people on the planet.” He goes on to say that if caterpillars begin eating the leaves of one tree in a healthy forest, the tree can respond several ways. It will pump distasteful and harmful tannins out to the leaves. It also releases a compound into the air that attracts predators to eat the caterpillars. Not only that, he reports that trees “also warn each other using chemical signals sent through the fungal networks around their root tips. ... Surprisingly, news bulletins are sent via the roots not only by means of chemical compounds but also by means of electrical impulses that travel at the speed of a third of an inch per second. ... Once the latest news has been broadcast, all oaks in the area promptly pump tannins through their veins.”

Arbuscular Mycorrhizal Fungi—this is the name for the type of fungus that has this specific beneficial connection with plants. Eighty percent of all plants on earth are connected to AM fungi! In addition to helping trees communicate, they assist with everyday maintenance of plants. By penetrating inside the plant roots, these fungi are able to deliver more nutrients, minerals, and moisture than the plant can get for itself. In the most prevalent symbiotic relationship on earth, these fungi supply the materials plants need, and in return the plant gives the fungi sugars it produced through photosynthesis.

Right here in Ann Arbor, there are studies being done that are shedding more light on these incredible connections. On a chilly evening in February, I sat down at Black Diesel Coffee with Professor Mark Hunter to talk about the invisible world of plant-microbe connections. He is the Earl E. Werner Distinguished University Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan. In the late 1980s he worked with the original "talking tree guy" Professor Jack Schultz at Penn State who did some of the earliest studies on plant-to-plant communication. Professor Hunter has been at U-M for 14 years. He and his graduate students are revealing some magnificent discoveries.

Professor Hunter says this "trading partnership" between plants and AM fungi is 460 million years old. "Everything a plant does, whether it's communicating with other plants, communicating with insects, pollinators … is influenced by mycorrhizal fungi."

In a series of studies, he and two of his students, Nate Haan and Rachel Vannette, discovered that wildflower plantings across Ann Arbor failed wherever there was a lack of AM fungi. It is remarkable enough to notice that plants are able to better succeed when they are placed in a soil rich with their fungal allies. But the influence of these fungi goes even further. Professor Hunter and his student, Leiling Tao, discovered that when Monarch butterflies sipped on the nectar of milkweed plants that were grown in soil lacking AM fungi, they were more susceptible to a parasitic disease. If Monarchs were given milkweed grown in fungal-rich soil to dine on, they were more resistant.

These discoveries are truly astonishing! Thinking about the implications of this in relation to our own health: are our vegetables and fruits grown in soil that is rich with AM fungi?

"Enabling and encouraging the microbial life in our soil by moving toward more no-till practices that do not disturb soil life is one very impactful thing we can do to help microbes help us."

—Hannah Rose Weber, Farmer/Partner at Green Things Farm

I talked with David Saturn Klingenberger, the founder and Chief Fermenting Officer of The Brinery in Ann Arbor. He expressed it very clearly. "There is a direct correlation between the microbes in the soil and the microbes in our gut. We are not separate from the soil—we have coevolved with it. A healthy soil is directly related to a healthy human body."

Let's explore this even further. There is a community of microbes living inside and outside our bodies that is analogous to the plant-soil-microbe system. In fact, we are more bacteria than we are human! Yes, the cells of bacteria, archaea, protozoans, and fungi living on and in our healthy human body outnumber our human cells. We have been learning only in the last decade or so how completely dependent we are on our human microbe allies.

This is perhaps why our ancestors included fermented foods and beverages in their diet, and why authentic sauerkraut, kimchi, and kombucha have become so popular. Fermented foods are nature's probiotics and eating them helps to restore and maintain a healthy balance of beneficial microbes in our bodies.

I asked Rachel Kanaan about this. She is cofounder and co-brewer, with her husband Tarek, of Unity Vibration Kombucha in Ypsilanti. She says these microbes in our gut are "involved in many other important processes besides just the act of digestion—including your metabolism, body weight, and immune regulation, as well as your brain functions and mood."

We are learning that being "too clean"—using antibacterial personal soaps and household cleaners, for example—is not good for us. It is comparable to taking antibiotics too frequently or unnecessarily. We simply need to preserve and increase the beneficial microbes of our bodies in order to stay healthy.

So, besides eating more fermented foods, how do we take all this information home, so that we can benefit from the microbial life that coevolved with us? I spoke to a number of local organic farmers, who were all very aware of the rich benefits of a living soil and were eager to share their methods with us. They have much in common, but one major choice is to avoid the synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and especially fungicides that would destroy the microbial life on plants and in soil.

Richard Andres of Tantré Farm in Chelsea said, "We make a concerted effort to keep as much root in the ground as possible, because it's where the fungi live." At home, when our vegetable gardening season is over, that means we can simply cut off the top of the dead plants rather than pulling them up or tilling."

Ben Kasmenn, the Farm Manager at Gateway Farm in Plymouth reinforced this principle. "First and foremost, we limit the amount of tillage we do in order to preserve the soil structure and integrity. We also rely on cover crops and compost to help feed the microbes and provide proper airflow, waterflow, and nutrient cycling. There are many other more specific techniques, all geared to preserving and growing a diverse, thriving, soil community. The microbes in the soil are the cornerstone to all life on this planet. Plants want to grow, and with a functioning microbiome in the soil they will grow without our help."

Now, as we move into spring and summer in Michigan, as life returns to our favorite places in nature, we realize we are seeing only part of this amazing story.

Hannah Rose Weber, Farmer/Partner at Green Things Farm in Ann Arbor added, "Enabling and encouraging the microbial life in our soil by moving toward more no-till practices that do not disturb soil life is one very impactful thing we can do to help microbes help us. A more diverse soil biome means that no one pest or disease can easily take over and infect our crops, allowing us to spend more time growing and harvesting food and less time reacting to problems. Feeding the soil by planting cover crops and amending with compost is our way of preventing issues before they happen."

Richard Andres at Tantré also shared that they keep 75% of the farm in pasture, along with native woods and wetlands. Professor Hunter said that "By far the best way to get native fungi into your soil is to grow native plants" and to amend the soil by adding compost. Compost and other organic matter, such as a natural, undyed mulch, can be added on top of the soil without tilling. These materials not only add native fungi and other microbes, but they provide food and protection for the microbes, enlivening our soil."

And how does this help our greater environment? First of all, whenever we plant natives we are restoring habitat for native pollinators, birds, and other beneficial creatures. Not only that, Dr. Elaine Ingham, world-renowned soil scientist and microbiologist shared the following recently with Sustainable Living Guide.

> As those fungi grow, they lay down massive amounts of carbon on the insides of the fungal tubes that they leave behind. And so when we get that fungal biomass growing in your soil, the way your healthy plants require, we can sequester up to—so far, we're seeing—11 tons of carbon sequestered per acre per year. And that's just when we're measuring the biology in the top three or four feet of the soil.
>
> Well, remember that that's not as far down as roots go. Roots will go down 15, 20, 30, 100, 150 feet. And so, we can be sequestering carbon all the way down. We could take all that elevated CO2 in the atmosphere and within just a few years, we could put it all back into the soil from whence it came.

Now, as we move into spring and summer in Michigan, as life returns to our favorite places in nature, we realize we are seeing only part of this amazing story. Countless invisible colleagues living on plants and in the soil, along with beneficial insects and other allies, are protecting and promoting growth in plants wherever we go. When we are managing our vegetable gardens, lawns, or shrubs at home, we know our most productive choices will be to protect and contribute to this living system as best as we can, so our little corner of Earth can be solving some of the world's most pressing environmental problems. As stewards, we are teaming up with the life around us, supporting our community, and enjoying its bounty.

* * *

Rosina Newton is an organic home and garden coach, environmental educator, and permaculture designer. She has planted trees, and taught children and adults in Texas, New York, and now Michigan. You may find out more at rokanew@gmail.com.

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OUT OF MY Comfort Zone

Edited By Diane Majeske

Crazy Wisdom Journal asked a number of leaders in southeastern Michigan's conscious living community to reflect upon times in their lives that they've left their comfort zones to venture out in new ways. In the distant past or much more recently, we asked, what did you do, what inspired you, did it change you, inside or outside, big or little? Did you attend a new class, take an adventurous trip, go skydiving, stretch beyond a long entrenched boundary, start a new relationship or end an old one, take a leap, retire, join the Peace Corps, go on a night trek in the wilderness, or just do something way out of your ordinary?

SUSAN WESTHOFF: FINDING A NEW LEVEL OF COMFORT OUTDOORS

Susan Westhoff is the Executive Director of the Leslie Science and Nature Center and the Chief Operating Officer of the Ann Arbor Hands On Museum.

I have left my comfort zone many times. In my career in the non-profit world, I've worked in the arts presenting arena, at a world-class symphony, on a long-distance hiking trail, at an Irish dance school, and now a nature center merged with a children's science museum. Fairly widely diverging subjects, I know, and in different parts of the country.

However, the time I keep coming back to is when I worked at the University Musical Society here in Ann Arbor in education, just out of school with a music performance degree, and spent my free time getting my "sea legs" as a fairly new hiker and camper. I loved the outdoors and was learning to explore and become comfortable as an outdoors person.

I TOOK A RISK AND SIGNED UP WITH THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY TO HELP BUILD TRAILS IN THE GILA NATIONAL FOREST IN NEW MEXICO.

I took a risk and signed up with the American Hiking Society to help build trails in the Gila National Forest in New Mexico. I'd never been to New Mexico, never built a trail, and didn't know anyone on the trip. I definitely had friends and family who didn't understand and thought I was a little crazy, and others who thought it was fantastic.

The trip was amazing. I was pushed physically beyond my comfort zone, swinging a Pulaski and pick Mattock, working with total strangers with a crosscut saw, and seeing a part of our country that was new to me. We dug and used pit toilets in the ground, made communal dinners, and in a matter of days created community deep in the Gila wilderness.

One day we hiked, and I saw my first herd of elk and heard them bugle. I had no idea the incredible diversity of wildlife, plant life, and terrain that I would see. We climbed up a fire lookout tower and talked about the management of the land, and how we impact that land in both positive and negative ways.

WE DUG AND USED PIT TOILETS IN THE GROUND, MADE COMMUNAL DINNERS, AND IN A MATTER OF DAYS CREATED COMMUNITY DEEP IN THE GILA WILDERNESS.

The experience transformed me in direct and indirect ways for certain. I felt more confident taking risks; it led me to move out of Ann Arbor to Chicago to see what it felt like to live in a big city and spread my wings. I felt more confident, after meeting my future husband, to up and move to the mountains of Colorado with him without either of us having jobs and trusting that it would work out. Over and over, I have taken risks, big and small, and knew I was strong enough to handle it if it didn't work out –which it hasn't, always.

This experience also solidified my love for the outdoors. When I first met my husband, we went camping over Thanksgiving in the Ozarks after knowing each other for only two months. We quickly took to backpacking together, and now that we have children, we enjoy taking them camping and exploring. This love for the outdoors connected me to an amazing group of people in Colorado as we worked to build the Continental Divide Trail (a passionate group still working on this goal, to complete the trail: continentaldividetrail.org), and brought me to the amazing place I work today, the Leslie Science & Nature Center.

I honestly don't know if I would have made my way to LSNC, if I hadn't made this life-long journey. It started when I was little and visited Ricketts Glen State Park with my grandmother and family, built as I started camping and hiking, and then became a critical part of me as I stepped out of my comfort zone and onto the trail with a Pulaski in hand.

I HAD NO IDEA THE INCREDIBLE DIVERSITY OF WILDLIFE, PLANT LIFE, AND TERRAIN THAT I WOULD SEE.

DAVID HALL: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON COMFORT ZONES

David M. Hall has followed a student's path in a journey rooted in a dual degree in Philosophy and Comparative Religion. He also is a horticulturist, educator, and beekeeper. He's lived in Ann Arbor for eight years and has been a single parent for the last twelve years. He has spread the guiding principles of permaculture to others through his business, Inner/Outer Services, and through participating in festivals, conferences, workshops, and trainings. You can learn more about David Hall and Inner/Outer Services by visiting his Facebook page @innerouterservices1111.

THIS LIFE IS AN OPPORTUNITY. COMFORT ZONES CAN BE TRAPS THAT THWART OUR HEARTS' LONGINGS.

This life is an opportunity. Comfort zones can be traps that thwart our hearts' longings.

Seeking truth has led me through a degree in Philosophy and Comparative Religion, but it had increasingly become unbearable to academically study the ineffable Divine. I began the long journey of deconstructing the "intellect's monarchy," by breathing correctly, and listening to Bitches Brew on scratchy vinyl.

I HAD BEEN LONG HAUNTED BY A STRONG AVERSION TOWARD THE PSEUDO-COMFORT OF COMPLACENCY.

I had been long haunted by a strong aversion toward the pseudo-comfort of complacency. Humans, and our society of status quos, appeared to be like an odd Twilight Zone episode. So, I took a one-way ticket to India, leaving everything behind, with no plan other than to understand.

I had a recommendation letter in hand to join a monastery, but it turns out a "holy life" fantasy can be a "drugs-sex-rock-n-roll" parallel pursuit, just harder work without all the laughs, and a private passing of gas rather than public.

Despite myself, I somehow snuck into the presence of wise teachers, and along with a variety of retreats and esoteric practices, like shoveling manure in 115 degrees, my lofty conceptions of being spiritual were shown to be nothing more than an old, empty beer can in the ditch. The ten-cent refund not being worth the energy it would take to retrieve it.

Later, I found myself in a refugee camp in Islamabad, near death, being cared for by Iraqi, Iranian, Kurdish, and Egyptian refugees.

When an exuberant retired lounge singer on a dark and quiet village street asked me for my wisdom and truth, all I could honestly muster up was, "I'm alive, and it's now."

HUMANS, AND OUR SOCIETY OF STATUS QUOS, APPEARED TO BE LIKE AN ODD TWILIGHT ZONE EPISODE.

Reference points, delusions, ideas of being and identity had been dissolved down to basically nothing. This was quite discombobulating. There was no peer pressure—no one to care or not to care, but there was no clarity about which was right either. I ate a lot of *chywanprash* (a cooked mixture of sugar, honey, ghee, gooseberry jam, sesame oil, berries and various herbs and spices prepared per instructions suggested in Ayurvedic texts) and had no important thoughts while wandering and observing.

Later, another one-way train ticket dumped me into the Sonoran desert, and I wound up disappearing down a rattlesnake hole into an experimental eco-village/intentional community for a decade. It was extremely rigorous and demanded discomfort, devoting my life to be of service full-time, without one day off in a year. It was a real boot-camp grind of suffering and striving to be someone important. There were regular seven-course home-cooked meals in the nonsense-sauce inherent in living intimately with 100 people. Fortunately, three jewels burned a hole in my pocket, as if it was the inner compass of an guiding albatross. The experience of living in this eco-village unfolded as a most valuable training in the reality and non-reality of our human condition. How much BS can a person put up with, and still come out of it stronger?

As strange as it may seem, it's actually a blessing to forget who we are for periods of time. Otherwise, the persona competition may take all the oxygen and we solidify as opposed to *fluidify*.

Through dreams I recognized that the clamoring for comfort is a normal tendency in this abnormal realm, that obtaining golden coins is for video game avatars not a natural woman; that true relaxation wasn't a station on the corner, but a result of dropping false pressures and accepting reality as it is; that the pursuit of healing oneself is a rabbit dragging a carrot-stick sniffing a tortoise butt; that the endless search for one's own perfect zone is just that. Getting nice and settled in while Vesuvius blows is a Type One Error in Permaculture.

I HAD A RECOMMENDATION LETTER IN HAND TO JOIN A MONASTERY, BUT IT TURNS OUT A "HOLY LIFE" FANTASY CAN BE A "DRUGS-SEX-ROCK-N-ROLL" PARALLEL PURSUIT...

Every time I catch myself getting too comfortable, a shudder occurs and down the check list I go: is it catnip—am i a cat? Is it a chocolate-mocha cookie laced with apathy? Am I the grand marshal of my own velvet parade of a new-age relativity porno? Fool me once, I'll be fooled again—I'm a fool, haha ho!

If it's true that beings are processes not nouns, then learning to write in poetic code is a good skill to have; if it is possible to regroove our neural networks, then is not one a funky hipster if they're getting down to the same old dusty tunes? And when your blind date whispers across the table their middle name is "*Détournement*" and winks, don't think about it or pontificate about Dead Time... just be courageous.

Green Living

Tips For Keeping Our Indoor (and Outdoor!) Air Clean

By Melissa Cooper Sargent

We are in our homes, and our yards (yay Spring!), more than ever. What can we do in and around our homes to be healthier and care for our environment more? There's a lot of easy things that can make a big difference. Let's start with our indoor air.

Inside

The air inside our homes tends to be 2½ times more polluted than the air immediately outside, according to the U.S. EPA. As homes have become more energy efficient (a good thing!), they also have less air exchange (not so good for healthy indoor air). Less fresh air comes in through the cracks and less polluted indoor air seeps out. The easiest thing we can do is open windows. Other things to consider...

What can we do in and around our homes to be healthier and care for our environment more?

Disinfecting vs. Cleaning
Healthy households don't need to disinfect every surface. Simple cleaning will do. The Covid-19 virus breaks down easily with soap due to its fatty cell wall.

If you need to disinfect due to an exposed or immune-compromised person in the home, avoid disinfectants with "quats" or quaternary ammonium compounds. The California Department of Public Health has specified avoiding products that contain quats in schools due to their asthma-causing effects. For disinfecting at home, use 70% isopropyl alcohol or 3% hydrogen peroxide or look for products with alcohol or hydrogen peroxide, such as:

- Purell Multi Surface Disinfectant
- Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Multi-Purpose Cleaner

Lead
Test for lead at home. Fewer children are getting tested for lead since the pandemic, and yet, children are spending more time at home, where they may be exposed. Lead can be in household dust if a house was built before 1978. Test painted surfaces for lead with lead test strips, such as 3M Lead Check, available at hardware stores. Window and door frames and staircases get more wear and are more likely to have old paint exposed. Cleaning these areas with a wet cloth or wet mop minimizes lead exposure through household dust. For more on preventing lead exposures in the home visit ecocenter.org/ending-childhood-lead-poisoning.

Air filters
While our windows are closed, the air inside our homes circulates through the filter of the HVAC system or the furnace. Setting the fan to the "on" position on the thermostat will keep the fan running even if the heat or air conditioning is not on, thus keeping the air circulating, according to the U.S. CDC. The agency also suggests using pleated furnace filters and changing them every three months. A clean, effective filter means cleaner air in the house.

The CDC suggests considering a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaner if you don't have an HVAC system or just want extra filtration. Select a HEPA cleaner with a Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) that is the same or greater than the square footage of the room. "The larger the CADR," says the CDC, "the faster it will clean the air." Additionally, exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom keep air flowing and may be useful if guests visit during the pandemic.

Home Projects
In the past year many of us have started home improvement projects. Remember to follow U.S. EPA best practices to keep your indoor air healthy during renovations. Among other suggestions, they advise misting surfaces with water before sanding or scraping to prevent dust and also using plastic sheets or tarps to cover surfaces and closing off work areas to contain dust. Good ventilation (fans and open windows!) is also key to keeping work zones safe.

Dryer Sheets
Household clothes dryers vent to the outside. You may not smell the perfumed dryer sheets in your own home, but the chemicals in dryer sheets are released into neighbors' yards and can pollute outdoor air. A 2011 study found more than 25 volatile organic compounds emitted from dryer vents, seven of which are classified as hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and two as carcinogenic HAPs. If a dryer is not properly vented to the outside of the home, that chemical-laden exhaust will pollute your indoor air. Be a good neighbor and forego dryer sheets.

Window and door frames and staircases get more wear and are more likely to have old paint exposed. Cleaning these areas with a wet cloth or wet mop minimizes lead exposure through household dust.

Be a good neighbor and forego dryer sheets.

Instead, you can cut static cling by adding wool dryer balls or a cloth with vinegar on it (Learn how to make your own dryer balls in Issue #73 of the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* in our Handcrafting Column). Or pull out and line dry clothes made of certain materials that cause static electricity, such as polyester, nylon, or rayon. Better yet, save energy and line dry all your loads. The washer and dryer use 13% of the household's energy, third in line behind heating and cooling (47%) and the water heater (14%) according to Connect4Climate. Line drying clothes is a good excuse to be outside and enjoy the warmer weather. Of course, clothes can be line dried in the house as well.

Outside

In our yards, the best and easiest way to keep our family healthy and protect the planet is to avoid pesticides. Pesticides are linked to a wide array of negative health effects, including neurotoxic effects, reproductive harm, and cancer. Children and pets are most vulnerable since they are closer to the ground (and even roll on the ground), have frequent hand (paw) to mouth activity, are smaller in size, and—for children—have developing immune systems. Avoiding synthetic pesticides may require rethinking what defines a beautiful lawn and garden.

Are dandelions the scourge of the lawn or could they be considered lovely little flowers? These bits of yellow dotting our lawns are, in fact, a most welcome site to pollinators (and children!) who have endured the barren, winter months. Dandelions offer hungry bees their first source of nectar each spring, sustaining our pollinators until the abundance of the season blooms in full. (And have you ever met a more joyous small child than one picking dandelion flowers, making dandelion chains, or blowing their white fluffy seeds?)

Anyone with a yard can contribute to helping monarchs, bees, and other pollinators. Embrace pollen and nectar-rich flowers like dandelions, clover, goldenrod, and aster that volunteer in your yard, and don't poison your visitor with lawn and garden pesticides. Avoiding pesticides will create a healthy place for children and pets to play as well.

Tips for a beautiful lawn:
1. Fertilize naturally with compost, organic fertilizer, and even mulched lawn clippings. Synthetic fertilizers kill beneficial organisms in the soil and make plants more vulnerable to disease and pests.

2. Treat grubs naturally with beneficial nematodes or milky spore; not Merit ® or other products that contain neonicotinoids. Neonicotinoids are a class of pesticides particularly lethal to bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. May, June, September, and October are the best times to apply grub treatments.

3. Avoid weed and feed products—they are pesticides! Most contain 2,4-D, a dangerous herbicide linked to cancer in humans and canine lymphoma. Corn gluten meal is a natural weed and feed. It feeds the soil with nitrogen and prevents seed germination. Other tips: mow high (raise blade to 3+ inches), overseed bare patches in lawn with grass seed (don't use in combination with corn gluten meal), and aerate the soil in spring and fall.

4. Plant native perennials, shrubs, and trees to attract pollinators, and beneficial pest-eating insects and birds. One local source for native plants is The Native Plant Nursery at the Ann Arbor Farmers' Market.

Melissa Cooper Sargent is an Environmental Health Advocate and works at the Ecology Center. You can reach her at melissas@ecocenter.org.

Random Acts of Kindness

MUTUAL AID IN WASHTENAW COUNTY

CAN THE PANDEMIC HAVE A SILVER LINING?

By Madeline Strong Diehl

It's likely that most Americans will remember the year 2020 as one of the worst in their lifetimes. But if we take a step back, we might find that the year also brought many inspiring reminders of the capacity of the human spirit to overcome adversity and lend comfort to strangers.

Italy was the first European country to suffer from a major outbreak of Covid-19 last spring, and we were stirred by images of Italians in lockdown singing to each other from their balconies.

BUT IF WE TAKE A STEP BACK, WE MIGHT FIND THAT THE YEAR ALSO BROUGHT MANY INSPIRING REMINDERS OF THE CAPACITY OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT TO OVERCOME ADVERSITY AND LEND COMFORT TO STRANGERS.

Closer to home, people in Ann Arbor and around Washtenaw County (as well as in many other places) created "porch pantries" stocked with food and supplies for strangers to take. Neighbors often helped to replenish the "pantries," so they were rarely empty.

That was just one of the most visible ways people were helping strangers in our community without expecting or wanting anything in return. Last March, a low-profile, loosely organized group of people started the Washtenaw County Mutual Aid + Resources Facebook page, which enables members to post their needs so that other members can help by donating money and/or other resources. The group does not advertise itself, so it only gained traction by word-of-mouth. Now it is gaining critical mass—it currently has about six thousand members, and sometimes dozens more join every week. Proponents of the mutual aid movement want people to commit to long-lasting social change, so people aren't allowed to join and post on the site unless and until they pass a mini quiz that demonstrates they have a basic understanding of mutual aid. (An article is posted on the page for background.)

"I only found out about it because several friends started talking about it last spring," said a woman who asked that I not use her real name. (For purposes of this article, I will call her Susan.) Susan's involvement started simply by dropping off diapers and wipes on a porch for a stranger who had requested them on the FB site. She also put twenty dollars in an envelope with a note that said: "You can do this!!!"

When the woman let people on FB know that her needs had been met, she also tagged Susan and said: "You'll never know how much your note meant to me!"

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Now Susan and the woman stay in close contact, and Susan is quick to tell me that the woman has grown so much that she now takes a leadership role in finding help for others. "She's been in the same place that they are, so she has a lot of knowledge about how to help them and work the system," explained Susan. "She also provides people with a lot of inspiration, faith, and hope because they know that if she made it out of such a difficult crisis, they can, too."

This dynamic—that both the giver and the receiver are given the opportunity to grow and benefit through their interaction—is at the heart of the mutual aid movement. Its informal motto is "solidarity, not charity," and Susan says she didn't really completely understand that concept until she had been participating for months. Now she financially supports two families who otherwise would be homeless.

"I'm not just giving people money to help them—I'm learning from them and growing. I've always considered myself an activist, but after doing this a while, I've learned way more about structural inequality and poverty. I knew there was poverty in Washtenaw County—I read the reports. But that's very abstract compared to reading real people's stories on Facebook. Now I really understand how privileged I am."

PROPONENTS OF THE MUTUAL AID MOVEMENT WANT PEOPLE TO COMMIT TO LONG—LASTING SOCIAL CHANGE.

At one point it dawned on Susan that she was essentially profiting off the pandemic while others were experiencing extreme stress from illness, lost jobs, and strained relationships.

"I am lucky to be part of a family that has a pension and a stock portfolio that is worth way more than it was a year ago," said Susan. "I have a job that I can easily do from home, and my husband and I share childcare, which saves us a lot of money. I no longer have to commute to Detroit, which saves on gas and wear and tear on the car. And I received the same stimulus check that everyone else did, and the same childcare benefit. At one point I calculated that I saved about eight or nine thousand dollars since last spring, so it's not really a sacrifice for me to pass on that savings to others who really need it."

One of the central concepts of the movement is that we can't wait for our elected officials to change society—we have to make the changes ourselves, and we have to start now. We also have to transform ourselves and the way we see ourselves to do that. The false storyline that all poor people bring their troubles on themselves through their actions is one of the first things that has to go. As one woman posted on the site: "My daughters don't deserve this, but I've been doing the best I can."

ONE OF THE CENTRAL CONCEPTS OF THE MOVEMENT IS THAT WE CAN'T WAIT FOR OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS TO CHANGE SOCIETY—WE HAVE TO MAKE THE CHANGES OURSELVES, AND WE HAVE TO START NOW.

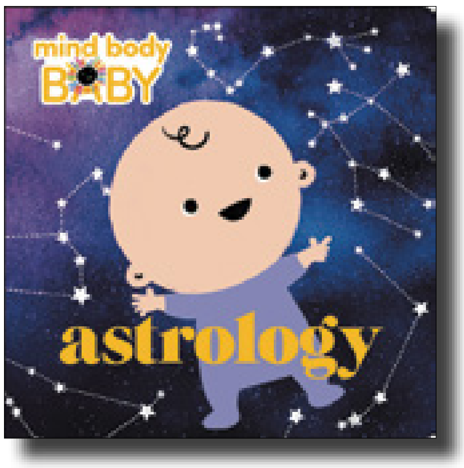
If you go to the site, you'll find many examples of how the concepts of "giving" and "receiving" are really two sides of the same coin. The following notice appeared on the site in late February: "Where can a local restaurant donate 60qts (sic.) of butternut squash soup ASAP? It was made on Thursday and should be consumed soon." (The soup had a taker within minutes.) Obviously in a community where more and more people are falling into poverty every day, it would feel awful to let sixty quarts of delicious soup to go to waste. So, the gift of the soup benefits the "giver" as much as the "receiver."

The practice of "mutual aid" is not new—it has a long history going back hundreds of years, usually organized by churches. What *is* new is that, through a modern technology like FB, communication and connection is made possible between people who in the past have been separated by race, class, and ethnicity. It may even come to pass that, when we look back at this moment in our collective history, we'll discover that our society met the challenges of the pandemic and was able to transform itself due in large part to the power of people just telling their life stories to others who felt honored to be entrusted with them.

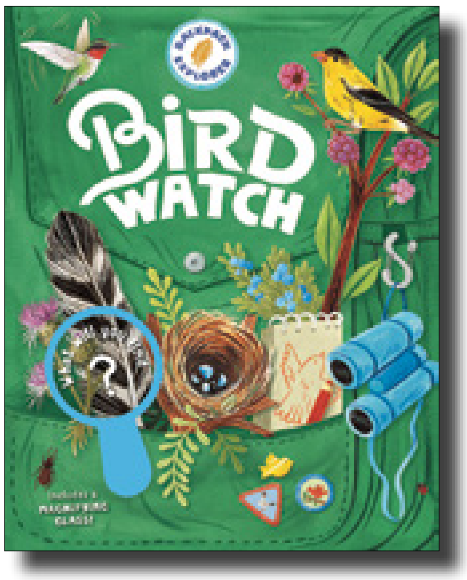
The Crazy Wisdom Kids Section

Books Available at Crazy Wisdom in our Children's Section

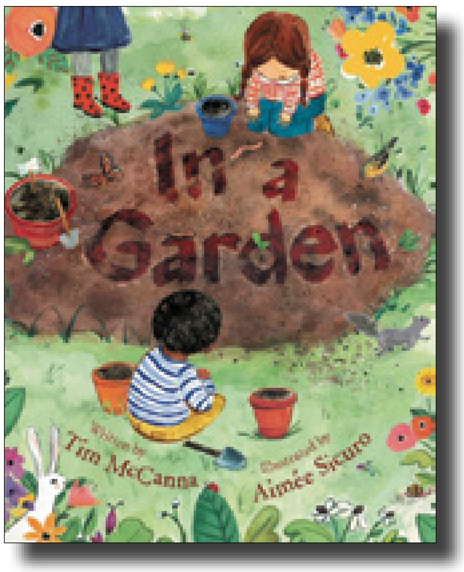
Reviews by CWJ Staff


mind body BABY
astrology

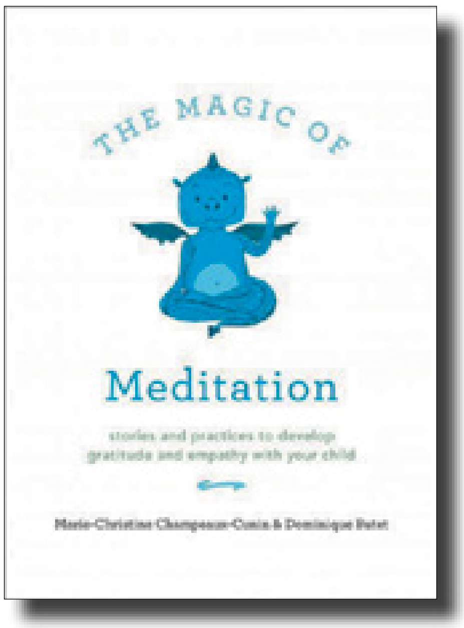
Astrology
Mind Body Baby
$8.99
This board book introduces the concept of Western astrological signs to the youngest readers and highlights related symbols, colors, and personality traits. Babies will learn the basics of how the sun, moon, and stars affect our human lives. With adorable illustrated babies and a hip design, the Mind Body Baby series is the perfect way for adults and their little ones to create a healthy mind and body connection together.


Backpack Explorer
BIRD WATCH

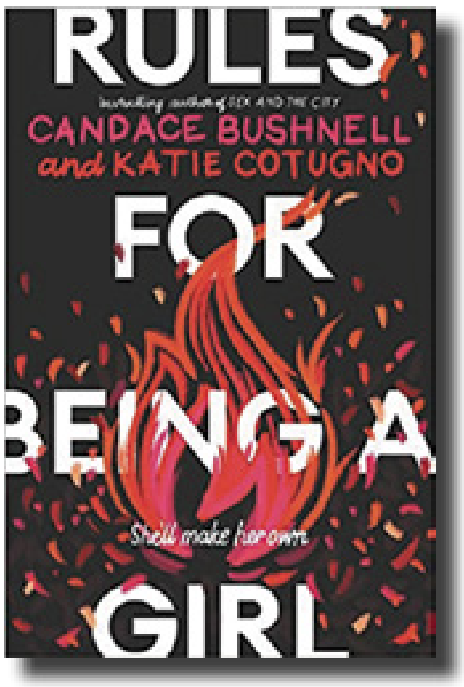
Bird Watch
By Backpack Explorer
$12.95
Bird Watch leads kids aged four and up through the basics of birding, from identifying common birds to learning about habitat and migration and listening for bird songs. The pages are packed with prompts and activities, including 12 interactive field guides (for common birds, nests, eggs, tracks, and more), sensory scavenger hunts, activities such as building a bird nest, matching games, and simple discovery zone pages about food chains and the life cycle of birds. Equipped with a real magnifying glass, stickers, and a birding log for recording sightings and encounters, this book is the perfect take-along for any nature adventure.


In a Garden
Written by Tim McCanna
Illustrated by Aimée Sicuro

In A Garden
Written by Tim McCanna
Illustrated by Aimee Sicuro
$17.99
How does a garden grow? Follow along from seed to sprout to bud to flower as a garden blooms. Worms, ladybugs, millipedes, and more help a garden grow each season. Tim McCanna's gorgeous, rhyming text, combined with Aimée Sicuro's stunning illustrations make this charming picture book as informative as it is fun to read aloud. Bonus backmatter features tons of cool facts about ecosystems and the symbiosis between plants and bugs.


THE MAGIC OF
Meditation
stories and practices to develop gratitude and empathy with your child
Marie-Christine Champeaux-Cunin & Dominique Butet

The Magic of Meditation: Stories and Practices to Develop Gratitude and Empathy with Your Child
By Marie-Christine Champeaux-Cunin and Dominique Butet
$16.95
More and more children are experiencing the benefits of mindfulness practices at home and in school to reduce stress, regulate emotions, and improve concentration. But, true mindfulness practice also opens the heart and increases compassion and empathy. This is really two books in one: a guide for parents to the basics and benefits of meditation for children, and a concise practice program of mindfulness meditation for children, ages three to seven.


RULES
bestselling author of SEX AND THE CITY
CANDACE BUSHNELL and KATIE COTUGNO
FOR BEING A
She'll make her own
GIRL

Rules For Being A Girl: She'll Make Her Own
By Candance Bushnell and Katie Cotugno
$19.99
Marin has always been good at navigating these unspoken guidelines. A star student and editor of the school paper, she dreams of getting into Brown University. Marin's future seems bright—and her young, charismatic English teacher, Mr. Beckett, is always quick to admire her writing and talk books with her. But when "Bex" takes things too far and comes on to Marin, she's shocked and horrified. As things heat up at school and in her personal life, Marin must figure out how to take back the power and write her own rules.

You may purchase these books at
shopcrazywisdom.com
by either visiting the website
or scanning the QR code (right).

Conscious Parenting

Dealing With Disappointment Mindfully

By Anne Ward

Parenting is challenging. Being a parent during a pandemic is even more difficult. How can we help our children cope with the disappointments that come their way while dealing with our own?

Over the last year, Covid shutdowns have canceled many activities that our children enjoy—birthday parties, school, soccer games—even visits with grandma and grandpa. Some older children have missed milestone moments like getting a driving license, going to prom, or attending a graduation ceremony. Losing these precious times, as well as contact with friends, teachers, and other special people, has been hard on us as adults, but even more devastating to our children. How can we help our children respond to these many cancellations?

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As parents, the last thing we want is to see our children disappointed. We strive to make their lives as happy and carefree as possible. It's easy to feel sorry for our children when they go through particularly difficult times and it's tempting to help them avoid disappointment at all costs.

We may find that our children's unpleasant emotions make us feel uncomfortable, too. Sometimes these feelings may even be "triggering" for us. However, brushing-off or ignoring our children's disappointments causes us to miss valuable opportunities to teach them how to process their emotions and build self-regulation. It also keeps our kids from learning that disappointment is a part of life.

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If we can stay in the moment with our children and be available to them, we can help them build their resiliency for the next disappointment. Disappointment is a part of life, and with a few simple steps, we can help prepare our children for life's ups and downs. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

1. Give your child time to calm down.
Allow your child time to calm himself or herself. Coloring, connecting with his or her senses, or using some deep breathing techniques will help your child get to a relaxed state. See if your child likes one of these exercises:

Belly Breathing (Young Children) – Have the child lay on their back on the bed or the floor. Place a stuffed animal on their belly. Inhale and exhale slowly, with deep breaths. Have them watch the "stuffie" on their belly rise and fall with their breath.

Square Breathing (School-age Children) – Have the child inhale and count to four. As they count, point, and trace the top of a square in the air with their index finger. Have them hold their breath while counting to four and trace one side of the square. Then exhale and count to four while tracing the bottom of the square. Finally, have them hold their breath and trace the last side of the square while counting to four. Continue tracing the square with four-count inhales, holds, and exhales.

Deep Breaths (Pre-Teen/Teenagers) – Have your child take a deep breath in, and release it fully. Repeat two more times. On the last exhale, have them release their breath fully and make a sound—a sigh, yell, roar, or whatever makes them feel better.

5-4-3-2-1 (Any Age) – Talk your child through this activity until he or she can do it independently. Say, "Name five things you can see." Wait for your child to name five objects he or she can see in his or her current location. Next say, "Name four things you can hear." Wait for her or his response. Say, "Name three things you can touch." This can be the physical things your child touches where they are sitting or lying—blanket, chair, pillow—or what touches your child—the sun or a breeze. Next say, "Name two things you can smell." And finally say, "Name one thing you can taste." The last two parts of this exercise may be difficult to do and you may choose to stop the count after number three.

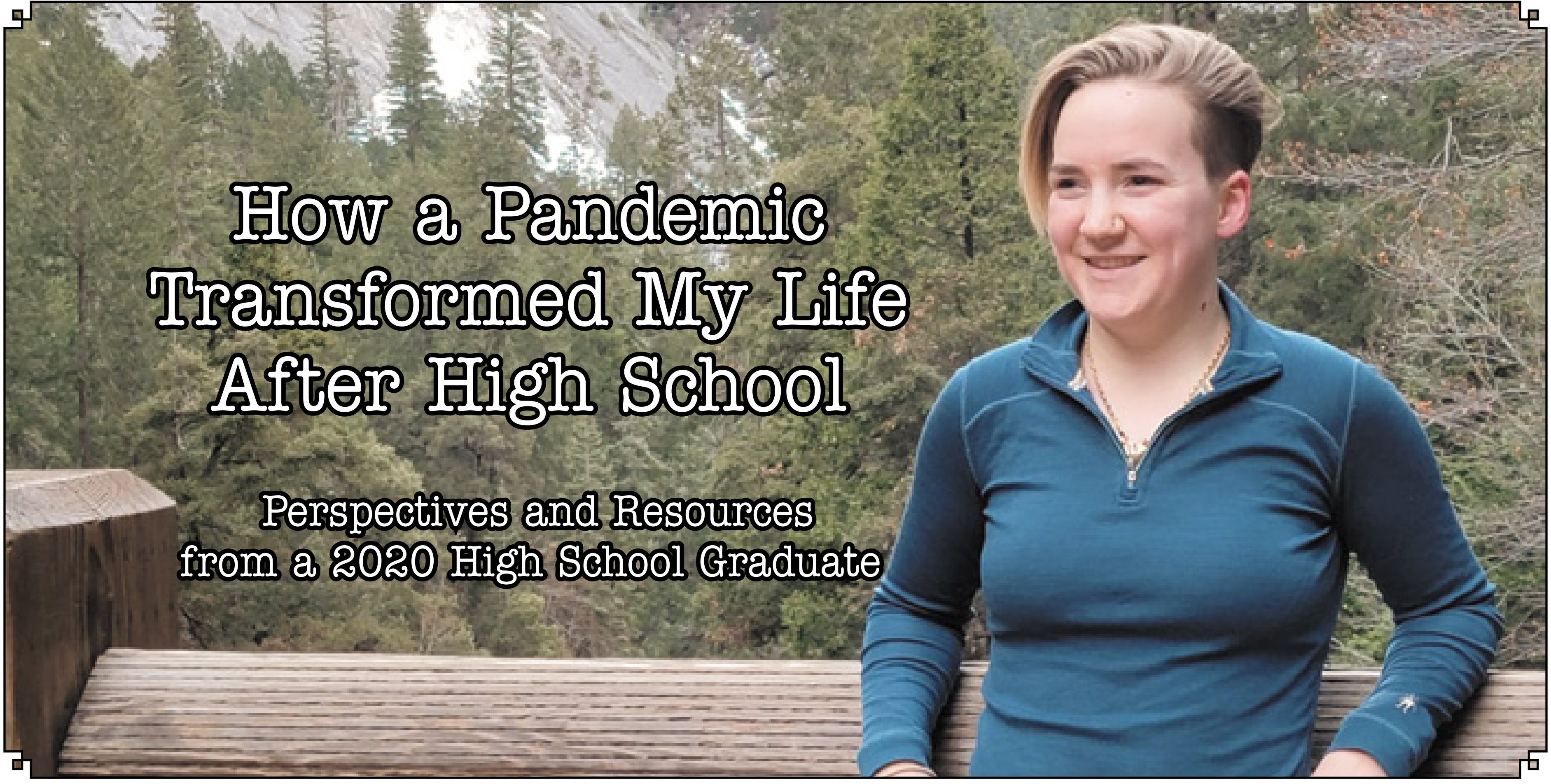
2. Help your child identify his or her feelings.
When both you and your child are calm, ask your child to describe how she/he is feeling. He or she may be feeling several things at once and need to hear from you that all of these feelings are normal and okay. Younger children may have trouble naming emotions and may prefer telling what color they are feeling. You may also want to have a mirror nearby and a poster of faces showing different emotions to support children that have trouble identifying their emotions.

3. Empathize with your child.
Listen to your child and give them your full attention. Take time to grieve with your disappointed child. Tell your child about times that you were disappointed and how those experiences made you feel. Sharing these times allows your child to see that disappointment is a normal part of life. It also validates your child's feelings of sadness and makes it more likely that he or she will reach out again to trust others for support when feeling sad and vulnerable.

> If we can fight the instinct to jump in to try to fix the situation for our children or distract them to avoid uncomfortable feelings, our children will have the opportunity to process their sadness and also learn a valuable lesson in the process—that they can go through hard things and survive.

If we can fight the instinct to jump in to try to fix the situation for our children or distract them to avoid uncomfortable feelings, our children will have the opportunity to process their sadness and also learn a valuable lesson in the process—that they can go through hard things and survive. One of the best gifts we can give our children is allowing them to experience unpleasant emotions, empathizing with them, and supporting them to move through those feelings. This is how we help them to become emotionally healthy and resilient adults.

Anne Ward has taught in Ann Arbor Public Schools for nearly twenty years and has three grown children of her own. She enjoys leading her students in yoga and mindfulness. Ward can be reached at award2009@me.com.



How a Pandemic Transformed My Life After High School

Perspectives and Resources from a 2020 High School Graduate

By Ellie Theriot

It was 11:46 p.m. on July 31, 2020 and I had just made the biggest decision of my life. I had deferred my admission to University of Michigan's School of Music. The decision process took less than 24 hours. Little did I know how much it would truly affect my future.

For the past eight years, music has been my life. As I progressed through high school, I began feeling pressured to say yes to opportunities because I felt like I needed to—for college applications, for my future career as a professional musician, and even as someone that couldn't let my teachers (who had invested so much into my musical development) down. This pressure came from what I call the "Ann Arbor Excellence Phenomenon" (A2EP) – a force that values external accomplishments more than happiness and well-being.

This pressure came from what I call the "Ann Arbor Excellence Phenomenon" (A2EP) – a force that values external accomplishments more than happiness and well-being.

The A2EP is that devious little voice whispering, "If you're not the best at something, you're a failure. If you're not pursuing your talents with the intent of becoming a professional, you're wasting your time. If you aren't attending the best school you could possibly attend, you won't get a good job. If you don't get into the University of Michigan, you're not smart enough." This voice sows doubt, disappointment, and despair as it travels from one student to the next. It furtively comes out of the mouths of competitive peers, well-intentioned and well-educated but nosey parents, and from the ubiquitous presence of the University and all things "Michigan." It is virtually inescapable.

When junior year rolled around, I fell victim to the A2EP. So did my friends. My mental health spiraled in tandem with my peers'. It was a constant battle between sleep, homework, and extracurriculars—sleep losing heroically. The worst part? It's not just the juniors and seniors in high school suffering from A2EP. It's sophomores, freshmen, and even middle schoolers that are struggling. Society's traditional education system can be ruthless as it singles out potential and latches on until burn out (or worse) results. Specialization has become synonymous with success. All of that pressure is creating a generation of kids more anxious and depressed than ever before.

Society's traditional education system can be ruthless as it singles out potential and latches on until burn out (or worse) results.

By my senior year, the wave of academic and musical enthusiasm had fizzled out and I was essentially running on fumes. I felt like I embodied the epitome of "burn-out." Yet, college applications and auditions never allowed me to relax. My mental health suffered. My physical injuries got worse. My journal from January 1, 2020 reads: "I know that this is not who I truly am because when I envision my best life, I am the exact opposite of what I am now. I am killing it with music, psychology, philosophy, and outdoor programs. I am happy and sleeping and eating and working out. I am not anxious or depressed and I am thrilled to be alive." Trying to imagine myself at college during that time was virtually incomprehensible, yet I wanted to go in order to "[kill] it with music, psychology, philosophy, and outdoor programs." In college. So, Ellie, where's the disconnect? The answer? Timing.

I was first introduced to the idea of the social clock in my AP Psychology class my senior year. It seemed like an extended metaphor for how the structure of the education system worked. We move through the grades, meeting benchmarks and the knowledge that propels us into the next grade, next school, next job or career. The social clock is this societal nag that can pressure us to follow paths well-trodden at the expense of our current health and well-being. Just because something is conventional doesn't mean it is what you, as a unique individual, needs. Covid-19 disrupted all of the "clocks" — social and otherwise. When life was in full swing, there was simply no time to reflect and consider other paths because school, applications, and music had me staring at the ground to avoid falling.

When life was in full swing, there was simply no time to reflect and consider other paths because school, applications, and music had me staring at the ground to avoid falling.

I needed time off from the academic and competitive environment that caused so much stress. One year later, I feel ready—more than ready to go back to school. I can't wait to meet and discuss and collaborate with vibrant, passionate, people. I can't wait to pursue my passions and let them guide me forward.

On the last day of July, I finally came to my senses and realized that another year of playing music alone, staring at a computer screen, and constantly fearing for my safety at college was not how I wanted to spend my time. I knew that if I stopped playing horn to let my injuries heal, I might never pick it up again, but with my horn professor's blessing to take nine months off and my piano teacher's words "You'll regret it if you don't defer," ringing in my ears, I decided to make the most out of this unprecedented year. I shared some highlights and insights in the hopes that my experience might serve as inspiration for an unconventional next chapter for others on the brink of big college decisions.

In August I did the obvious—I started a bread baking business. Well…not really, but the quarantine bread baking contagion was spreading and I soon got hooked. Next, I signed up to be a "WWOOFer" joining the community of folks looking for World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (wwoof.net). I soon found myself at Strawbale Studio (strawbalestudio.org) in Oxford, MI and spent September learning about natural building and living out of my car (and tent). Some highlights include: making horse manure plaster, harvesting the results of our shiitake mushroom inoculation, building (most of) a stone bench, painting a house, fixing a leaky thatched roof, picking up guitar, chatting by the fireside deep into the night, learning how to work alongside people very different from me, and growing more in that month than in the past year. I learned that connection—to nature, to humans, to my body, and to the universe, is really at the crux of it all. On September 25th I wrote, "I am doing so well! I need to be grounded in order to take flight." That epiphany should've been no surprise—we come from nature, and we are wired to be immersed and invested in the beautiful process of survival. It was bittersweet when I finally drove home.

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During October I gardened, worked at Human Electric Hybrids (the new electric bike store in Kerrytown) entering data, babysat, and tutored. I discovered Stoicism (check out The Practical Stoic podcast with Simon J. E. Drew!), embraced minimalism (got rid of half of my belongings) and #vanlife (travel anywhere, anytime, and be completely independent, paying only for gas and food!). An appointment with Diane Babalas at Gateway Chiropractic inspired me to become a traveling chiropractor, living out of my theoretical van, and exploring the world.

In November I got a job at Zingerman's in the Mistakes department at the mail order warehouse, worked there through the winter holidays, continued tutoring and babysitting, and began dreaming of traveling out west. A friend introduced me to Workaway (workaway.info)—a program like WWOOF where you can go stay with hosts, work for them, and in exchange receive accommodations, food, and an incredible life experience. So, for those of you looking for an adventure and to meet some new folks, check out WWOOFing and Workaway. Could lead you to some very interesting places.

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Throughout the many jobs and experiences, I did my very best to refute the stigma that those who take a gap year between high school and college fall off the wagon—but taking a gap year is just one of many paths open to the high school graduate.

Another obvious path is college. I think the most important thing to remember when choosing any path, but especially college, is to know your *why*. Automatically assuming college is the next step can be a trap. Consider college's traditional role in the "system"—the common justification is "I'm doing [fill in the blank] so I can get a job that will support me and my family...." However, this narrative is based on a future that isn't guaranteed. Instead, I implore you to consider college in relation to knowing your *why*—the *why* that gives you purpose in the present and throughout the rest of your life. Your *why* ultimately relates to your higher purpose and overall well-being. There's a quote by Stoic philosopher, Marcus Aurelius, which states "You could leave life right now. Let that determine what you do, and say, and think." Covid-19 has *clearly* demonstrated how fragile life is and how important it is to understand your carefully chosen actions.

If you're in a place where college makes sense for you, great! I plan to attend school, too. Wherever you're at, it's important to justify any path you choose for both your present and future well-being's sake. I planned to go to music school because I owed it to my past self to see how far I could take horn. I felt like I was letting myself and others down if I didn't pursue horn to my greatest potential. That reasoning failed to meet present Ellie's needs. The timing just wasn't right.

I want to go to college because I want to become a chiropractor—a dream I discovered in the middle of my gap year. If I hadn't given myself the time and space to explore other paths, who knows if chiropractic school would've ever entered my list of future dreams.

Thinking about these big life decisions can be stressful. Believe me, I know. To keep the stress at a minimum, here is some advice and perspectives that have helped me along the way.

1. Know that whatever you choose to do after high school (and beyond), there will always be an opportunity cost.
2. Choices are not permanent. Just because I chose music in high school obviously did not mean that I continued to choose it.
3. You are in control to choose and to choose again and again and again—keep trying until it works.
4. "Amor Fati" = love your fate. Every experience is valuable, it's up to you to find the hidden lessons.
5. In addition to knowing your *why*, another helpful framework for me was making life choices that would make my life story one worth retelling.

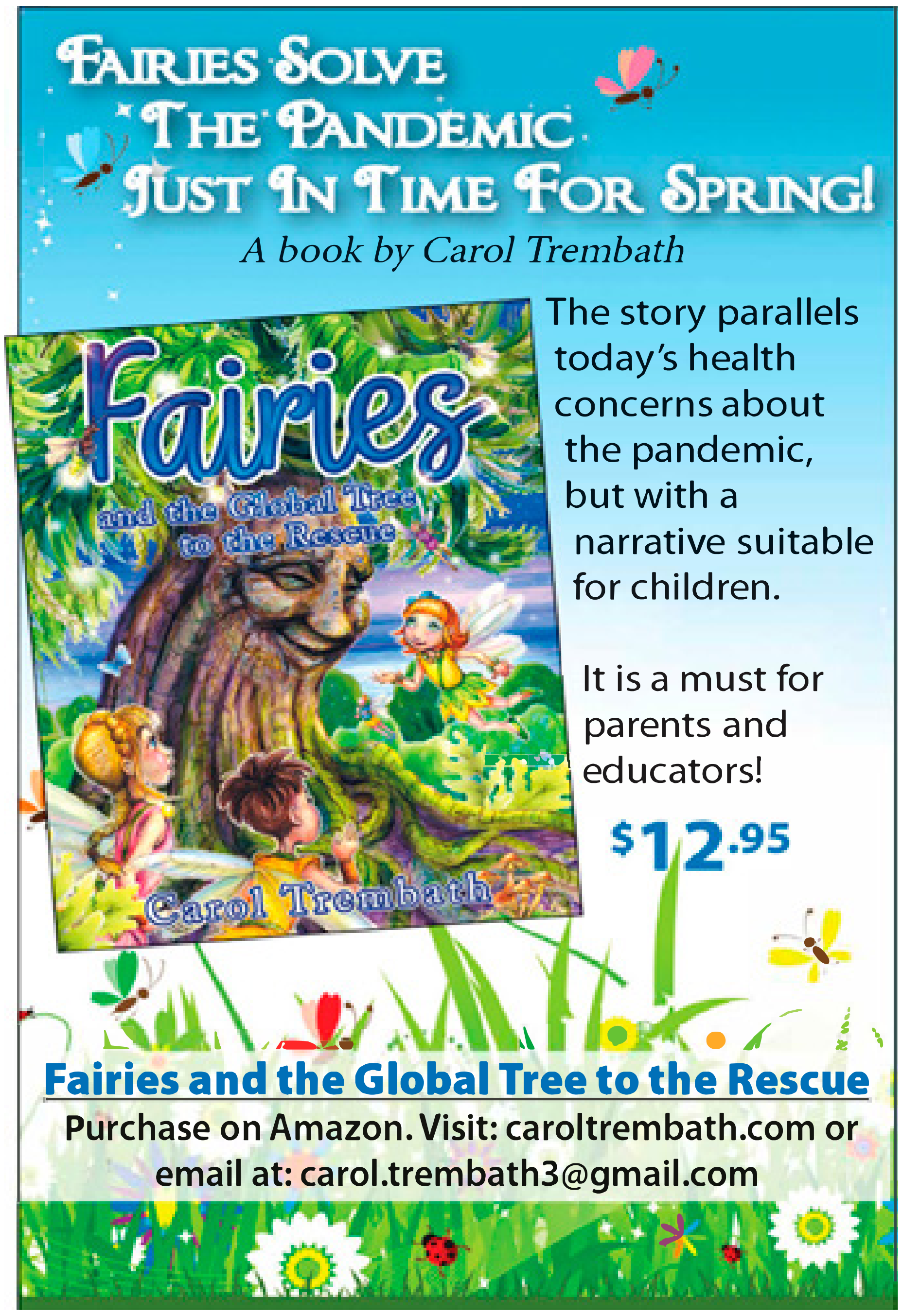
For those of you that are already considering future careers, I will offer this. Most of the jobs you will have in your lifetime likely haven't been created yet. The future is changing exponentially and because of that predicting what life will look like in 5, 10, or 20 years is a whole lot of guesswork. It's not worth worrying about.

The future is changing exponentially and because of that predicting what life will look like in 5, 10, or 20 years is a whole lot of guesswork. It's not worth worrying about.

All of this comes back to the pandemic. Covid-19, thank you. Thank you for making online college just unappealing enough that I decided to defer. Thank you for cancelling my rehearsals and recitals so my other interests could grab some of the limelight. And thank you for reminding us all of how fragile life is and that I, for one, can help. Becoming a chiropractor will be a small contribution I make in this world that is hurting.

Dancesi With Dirt XV
2019

Covid-19 has forever changed our lives. It has granted us the opportunity to pause and consider our values and the fleetingness of life.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"Amor Fati" = love your fate.

If/when you do decide to apply to college, here are some things that helped me during the process.

1. Apply to many types of schools, even if you think you know what you're looking for. Your mind can change quickly.
2. Know that any school you go to will be an extraordinary valuable life experience even if—especially if—it's not what you expect.
3. If a school is not the right fit, you can always transfer or take time off to work or travel. You're not stuck.
4. Utilize recent alumni and current students as much as you can. They are great resources and can provide much more insight into what the experience will actually be like.
5. And for all you parents—hands off! Let your kid lead. Let them discover how to manage their time and write with their own voice. It's their future, letting them take charge of it is the best thing you can do (my mom and I both agree on that one in case you were wondering).

There's so much to consider when thinking about life after high school. There's so much to look forward to and be excited about. As the transition to adulthood begins and more freedom is granted, remember that the options are many. Covid-19 has forever changed our lives. It has granted us the opportunity to pause and consider our values and the fleetingness of life. It's taught us to take nothing for granted—not tomorrow, not any future we may envision. It's up to us to make conscious choices knowing that the years following high school are the prime years of life and we cannot take a single one for granted.

Ellie Theriot can be reached at: ellietheriot@gmail.com.

Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community

Socially Conscious (And Distant) Kids' Art & Personal Development Programs After the Toughest Parenting Year Yet

By Laura K. Cowan

It has been a challenging year for group events, to say the least, as many kids' programs around Ann Arbor went virtual or were suspended. The situation dragged on so long, I decided to create my own after-school program for half-grown kidlet—a mashup of virtual art programming and trying to get her out of the house and off her screen. Surprisingly, she adapted quite well to being home, so the biggest challenge was getting her moving again. I started thinking: what about all the other parents out there who are sick of researching which programs are still running or don't have the brain space to plan enriching activities anymore? What if we came up with a plan for this year that didn't depend on virus numbers to succeed? Here's what I came up with. It's pretty simple, though I think you'll be pleasantly surprised, as I was, with some unique programs out there right now to choose from.

It has been a challenging year for group events, to say the least, and many kids' programs around Ann Arbor have gone virtual or been suspended.

Mama's Master Plan:

1) Virtual kids' programming for social support after school.

2) Activities that bring some normalcy back without the paranoia of the virus shutting it down.

3) Don't worry about another single thing. Have a coffee.

Here are some suggestions for you, if you're trying to plan out spring or summer and are just at the end of your rope when trying to find good activities for the kids, not to mention socially conscious ones. I hope this takes the edge off the research, because I don't know about you but besides not knowing what day it is or whether I'm expected to wear pants, I have had it up to my forehead trying to re-plan my kid's schedule over and over as conditions change. This is our plan, and we're sticking with it, at least until the next ridiculous unforeseen crisis, in which case we will probably live out of a van and sell wind chimes. I joke, but you know what I mean. It's time to get out of the house, even for this introverted writer. Forget vacation planning. We just need a day out of these four walls.

Spiritual Programming For Kids

Many religious gatherings are still in session, but less structured programs are in suspended animation. I did find one still operating that is quite inclusive to many belief systems and is focused on community service, something I feel gets left off the table with so many other priorities that come with raising a child. The Ann Arbor Interfaith Center for Spirituality has moved their youth circles online to Zoom. Aside from potential privacy concerns with the link being posted publicly (have you been Zoom bombed yet?), I think this could be a great way to connect with other kids, as well as staying in touch with their frequent community service and activism opportunities for young people. It tends to lean toward older kids in this group but stay tuned for activities for all ages. As virus numbers hopefully come down toward the latter half of this year, expect programs like this to gradually resume more normal events.

For more information about Interfaith Center events, visit interfaithspirit.org/youth-education/.

Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth

Personal Development? In a Pandemic?

How could you possibly add another to-do? Well, like meditation practice, martial arts for kids are a great way to weather a pandemic, because it feels as good as it is good for you. Asian Martial Arts Studio in Ann Arbor is a traditional dojo on Fourth Street downtown that teaches Chinese and Japanese martial arts, including a kids' program that combines karate, kung fu, and aikido. I have taken kung fu at AMAS in the past and noticed while I was in the dojo that the kids' program taught quite a bit of discipline and personal development in a positive way. I think you'll find this is true with a number of programs around town, such as Keith Hafner's Karate on Main Street and the great kids' karate program at the YMCA we've tried that's part of the Ann Arbor Karate Club, all of which have different flavors on the same idea. Group exercise classes are back in session in Michigan but require certain restrictions such as ventilation precautions. If your kid isn't high risk, you might consider getting them involved in a martial art this year to get them back in shape or reconnected with friends after remote schooling, while they also have the opportunity to learn self-control and find the self-confidence that comes from physical and mental personal mastery.

Well, like meditation practice, martial arts for kids are a great way to weather a pandemic, because it feels as good as it is good for you.

Magnus and Felix Porter Breaking Boards

Sensei Charlie Rooney teaches the kids' karate program at AMAS. I asked him about the benefits of kids studying martial arts from a consciousness standpoint. "I think that martial arts help kids develop in five ways," Sensei Rooney said. "Exercise, focus, confidence, the value of correct technique, and the importance of avoiding violence."

That last one surprises people when they first join the martial arts. Learning proper martial arts teaches you to avoid violence, and to use it as a last resort of self-defense, not to bully or show off. Sensei Rooney said martial arts are also good physical exercise, "developing strength, endurance, agility, and coordination. As you know, nearly all of us get too little exercise, kids included."

So why martial arts this year, besides getting out of the house? "It teaches the importance of focus," Rooney told me. "We practice concentrating on the current task in the face of distractions through games and *ippon kumite* (two person fighting drills)."

It seems to me that the pandemic has created a distracted quality in me, at least, from being overly busy juggling too many priorities.

It seems to me that the pandemic has created a distracted quality in me, at least, from being overly busy juggling too many priorities. But when I make time for martial arts, it keeps my body healthy and cues my mind to focus and calm down, to remember that I am not lost in an endless haze of "Blursday," as our family calls the phenomenon of never remembering what day it is without the usual scheduling cues. "Internal" martial arts programs you could try after a basic kid's program can add to that basic regimen of physical martial arts by offering additional instruction in meditation, body posture, and sometimes energy healing and martial applications for energy principles. If your kid is an esoteric type, a kids' martial arts program, even a start from scratch one like most of them are, is a great way to get them started on a routine that can lead to more mindfulness practice and body awareness in a healthy way down the road.

"[Martial arts are] another way for children to learn the practical importance of doing things the right way," Rooney explained to me. "For example, with good technique even a small child can break boards without much effort. With poor form, they just can't do it."

Meditating at the beginning of class

"Repetition is another part of the learning process that martial arts stress," Rooney said. "You won't maintain balance while throwing an opponent until you have practiced the technique hundreds of times. You will still be improving after years of practice."

So, beyond the regular practice, discipline, and self-control required for martial arts, how is personal development taught to children? "When one of the children asks, we will discuss violence and the martial artist's attitude to it," Rooney gives as an example of how these things come up in class. "I think most of the children understand very well (better than my generation did at their age) that violence is a last resort, only to be used in defense, never to be considered as a solution for a real-life problem. However, it is probably helpful for the message to be reinforced by another set of adults." This seems particularly useful to me as the mother of a kid who gets along great in school but occasionally runs into a bully and has only been taught non-violence by parents and school staff. Martial arts are a good way to address things kids often don't know how to ask. Also, this year, it seems to me that martial arts are a great stress reliever, and many kids are struggling with frustration and pent-up energy.

Also, this year, it seems to me that martial arts are a great stress reliever, and many kids are struggling with frustration and pent-up energy.

At AMAS, kids wear loose-fitting clothes for the first few classes and then purchase uniforms after deciding to stick with the art. This is common to many classes, though a free, standard-issue colored belt is often given to children beginning karate and uniforms vary by dojo.

To learn more about martial arts options for kids at AMAS, you can call Sensei Karl Scott who runs the dojo at 734-994-3620 or email karls@a2amas.com. To learn more about AMAS kids' program, visit a2amas.com/childrens_program.php. Keith Hafner's Karate is at karateisgoodforyou.com. The Ann Arbor YMCA programs for kids can be found at annarborymca.org.

"Ikebana has been around since the fifteenth century and is practiced all over the world."

—Liz Larwa

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A Unique Opportunity For Kids To Learn An Ancient Flower Arranging Art

Some art studios shut down during the pandemic or offer remote programs and DIY home art kits for pickup, but did you know kids can learn other art forms such as Ikebana flower arranging? This might be for the older set depending on level of interest and skill, but it's pretty inclusive and might even be a nice family activity to replace movie night. Ikebana is a flower arranging art form taught in Ann Arbor at Matthai by local Ikebana International Chapter #183. President Liz Larwa told me that they're currently showing a video once a month featuring "an expert in Ikebana doing a demonstration of about eight arrangements using various flower and branch materials and containers."

Some art studios shut down during the pandemic or offered remote programs and DIY home art kits for pickup, but did you know kids can learn other art forms such as Ikebana flower arranging?

The demonstrator explains what he or she is doing during the arranging. Videos run on every third Tuesday evening of the month and repeat the third Thursday afternoon each month.

"We gladly welcome teens to join us—and their parents, too," Larwa said. "A challenge is put out to viewers to try to make their own arrangement based on one of the principles demonstrated in the video. They send a picture to me and describe their arrangement. We then show them during the next video meeting."

Larwa said that the videos are a wonderful way to expose those who are new to Ikebana to those who are experienced in this ancient art form. "Ikebana has been around since the fifteenth century and is practiced all over the world."

Currently the local Ikebana chapter is not holding any classes in person but are in the process of trying to design a full online class. "Once the pandemic is over, we will be very willing to try to set up some kind of special series of classes for teens. We normally meet at Matthaei once a month on Thursday afternoons," Larwa said.

You can learn more about Ikebana flower arranging classes online by emailing a2ikebana@gmail.com. For in-person class information post-pandemic, contact Matthaei Botanical Gardens at (734)647-7600. Their class listings are at mbgna.umich.edu/.

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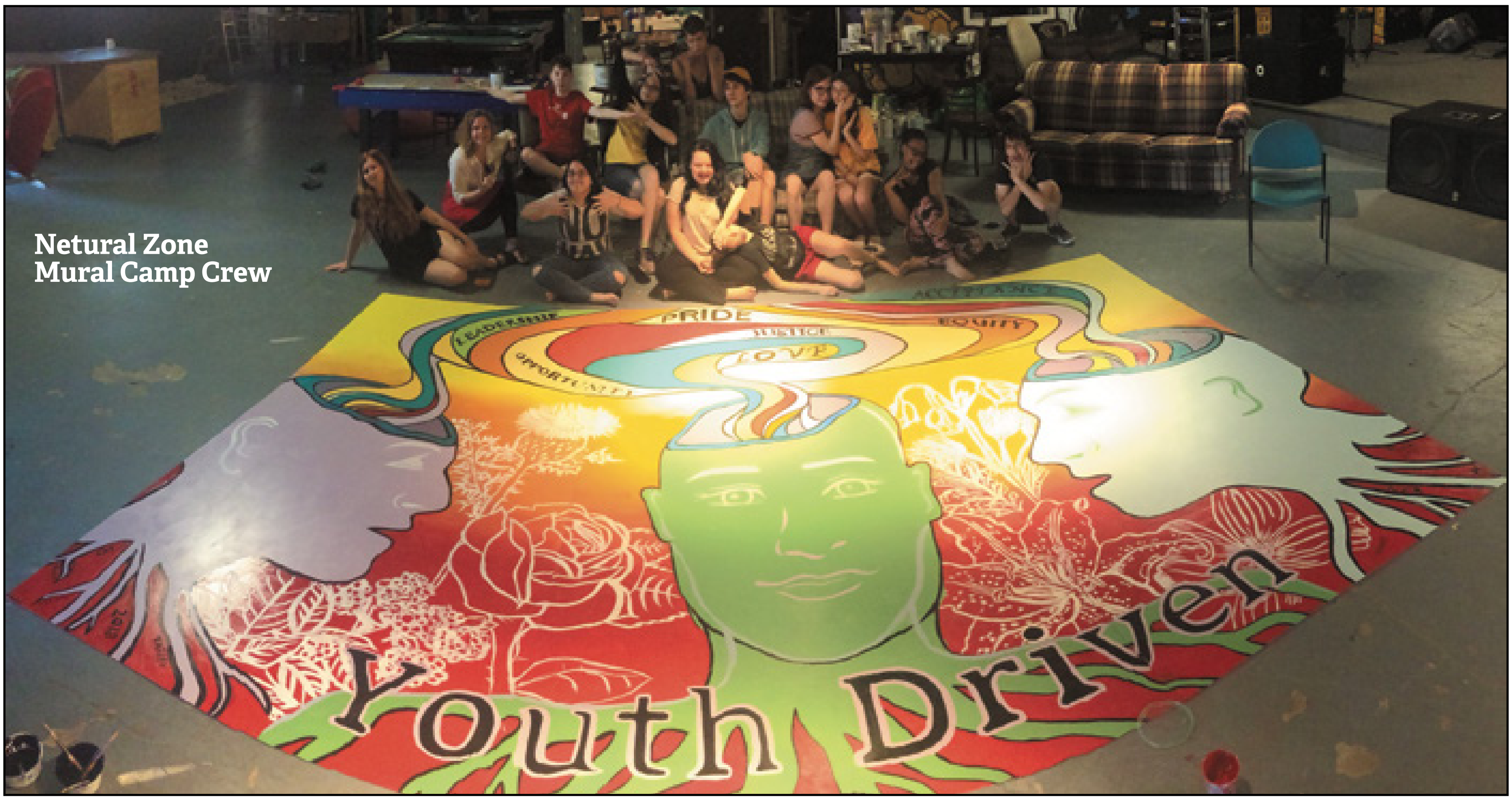
Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community

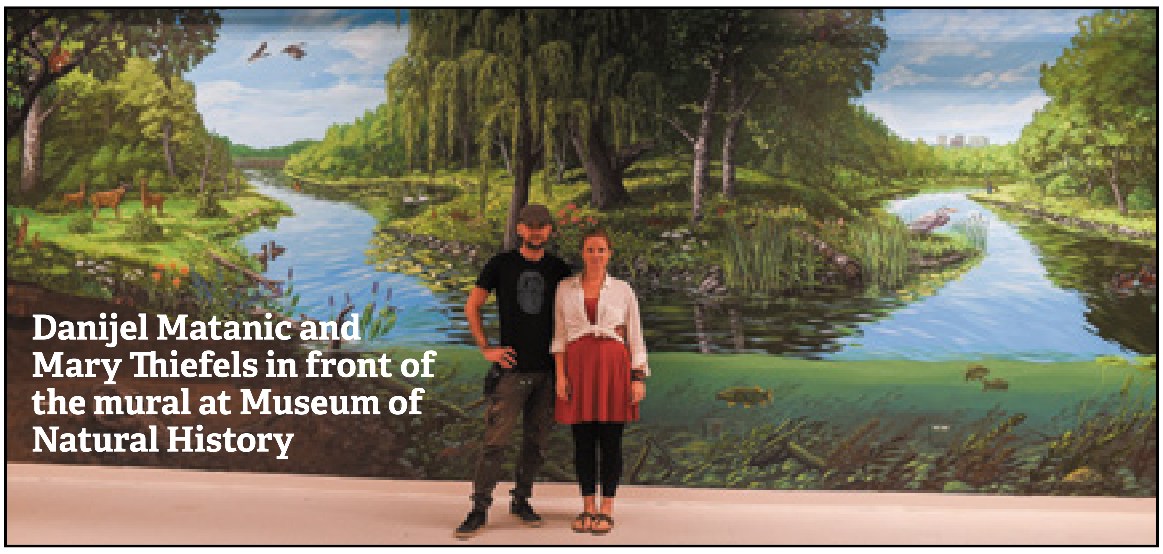


Netural Zone
Mural Camp Crew

Continued from previous page

Community Art To Support Your Neighborhood Space

Mary Thiefels of TreeTown Murals is a beloved local community artist who works with children and adults to plan out community murals that express a community sentiment of identity and wishes for a better future. The Ann Arbor Public Schools are a big collaborator with TreeTown Murals, and Thiefels also offers a paint by number mural project for groups that allow kids to collaborate on a general design and then fill in colors in a grid with Thiefels and her co-founder husband finishing out the final painting. We were wondering how people might still get together to create community art in a time of social distancing and were happy to hear that Thiefels found solutions to the challenges currently facing group activities for kids and continues to offer group projects with social distancing measures in place. Thiefels told me:



Danijel Matanic and Mary Thiefels in front of the mural at Museum of Natural History

Mary Thiefels of TreeTown Murals is a beloved local community artist, who works with children and adults to plan out community murals that express a community sentiment of identity and wishes for a better future.

"Art can be socially conscious: The excitement of being able to make something that represents their school and that collaborative element [excites kids]. Through an activity process, we have a process to draw out ideas, have kids work on their own, then team up with other people. The end result, even if a young person has painted a small area, is a sense of ownership. When it's a public piece, with kids bringing people together to show others, it brings people together to leave a legacy for the community."

Thiefels' projects are often large scale. You'll see her work on buildings downtown, or in the public schools. Though this is an activity that requires a larger group budget and more planning ahead, I thought it would be lovely to offer a kids' activity or community family activity that people could pursue if it were a right fit, purely because the pandemic has so impacted communities that some groups might want to create art to express their experience and celebrate still being able to come together to create.

Thiefels explained:

> Art develops individual character and is an agency for what kids want to say. The youth population is often told what to do, where to go. The freedom to express is mind-blowing. We've had tears and group hugs. Often there's a struggle to get everyone's vision, or a struggle in the painting process, seeing different skill levels for example. When kids see it come together, there's a stepping back. Young people I've worked with have developed art careers they were so inspired.

In a time when many young people are feeling isolated, how wonderful would it be to sponsor a community art project that brings together kids and families to express their experiences of the last year and envision a better future through art?

In a time when many young people are feeling isolated, how wonderful would it be to sponsor a community art project that brings together kids and families to express their experiences of the last year and envision a better future through art?

During Covid-19, Thiefels said many contracts were cancelled or delayed, but “a couple were moved from a public space to our shop.” The TreeTown team works in their shop to complete projects, then delivers and installs on site. “Small numbers of people in groups or outdoor work are still possible,” Thiefels said, “with masks and distancing. We’re still open to working with any party.”

TreeTown Murals has worked with the Neutral Zone, sponsors a group of artists to paint downtown Ann Arbor shop windows for Christmas, and has also created murals for the new Natural History Museum, but they’re also open to kids’ events and are working with Clague on a mural remotely in 2021. I know I’ve often been surprised at how my daughter is feeling this year. If you have an out of the box idea for how to bring your neighborhood group together through art, you might consider this unique option to leave a lasting mark of kids’ self-expression on your community.

Learn more about TreeTown Murals on their website treetownmurals.com.

Official and Do-It-Yourself Family Environmental Cleanup Opportunities

So, what about do-it-yourself activities? I know my planning circuits are blown at this point, but I have been thinking of ways to get outdoors and keep teaching my daughter about community service and environmental cleanup. At least, that’s the track running in the back of my mind behind all the other things I need to juggle. Maybe we just need a break to get outdoors.

> **There are programs through the City of Ann Arbor this year where your family can get out to learn about land stewardship or to walk in city parks, but I was thinking this year might be a good time for me to start a personal practice like the gentleman by the river that is more self-sustaining.**

There is a retired gentleman who walks down Huron River Drive every day the same time I would drive kiddo to school (or these days, driving a fur baby to the vet while kiddo remote schools), and he picks up trash in a plastic bag. I greatly appreciate people like this who take time out to keep their local areas clean and am always sure to wave a thank you and give him space on the side of the road. There are programs through the City of Ann Arbor this year where your family can get out to learn about land stewardship or to walk in city parks, but I was thinking this year might be a good time for me to start a personal practice like the gentleman by the river that is more

Continued on next page

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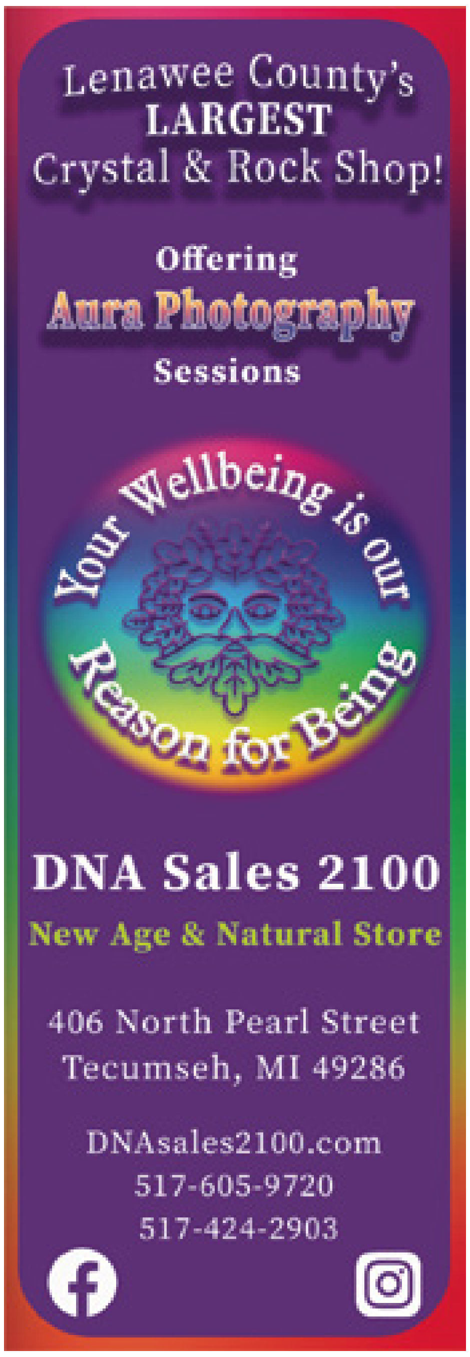

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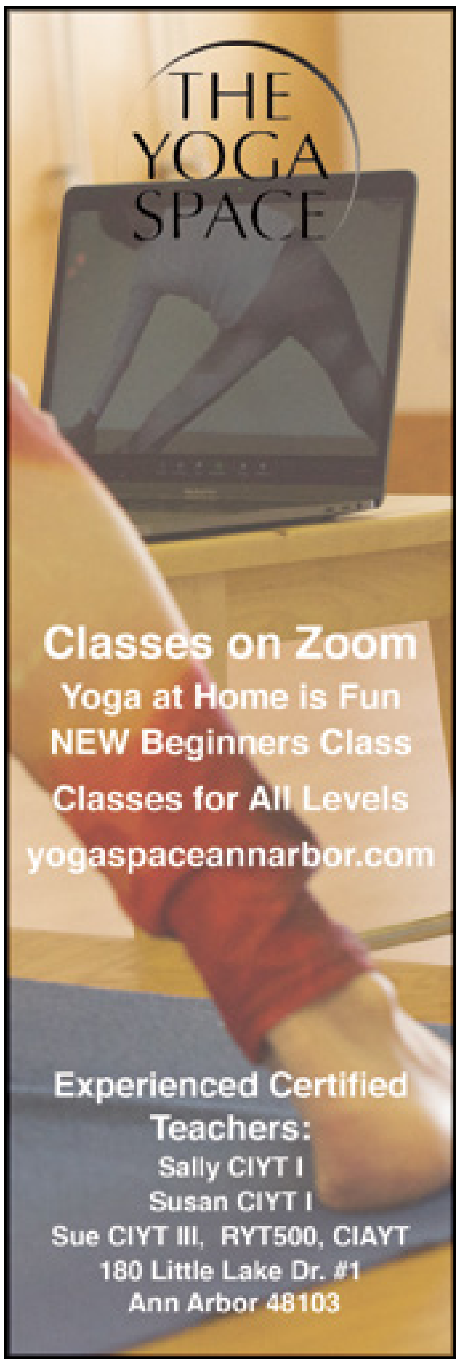

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Crazy Wisdom Kids

An ongoing section of
The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Articles, calendar listings, advertisements,
music and book reviews, and other features
that focus on raising conscious and spirited kids.

If you like our CW Kids section, and would like to contribute to it,
contact jennifer@crazywisdom.net.
We welcome story ideas, illustrations, feature writing, and photographs.

Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community

Continued from previous page

self-sustaining. What if it becomes a mindfulness practice for you to pick up trash around your neighborhood on a daily walk, to pick local wildflowers (in a sustainable fashion: never take all of a plant in a given area or harvest from private property) or to keep trails clean in your local park while socially distancing and getting outdoors? Are there programs that are going under-funded this year where you could volunteer with your kids and get them out of the house?

We just don't know how long this is going to drag on at this point, so instead of focusing on initial safety and practical planning through the pandemic, I'm switching over to making sure our family has a regular check-in to make sure everybody is okay, and then hopefully doing more outdoor activities in the summer that give us space to move around without worrying about who is not wearing a mask or how many people might be at an event. I'm protective of kids, but I just don't have the energy to worry anymore, so I'm creating a schedule around activities that give us a little breathing room while keeping us focused on the positive. If you've found ways to do this, I'd love to hear from you about your experience.

> **I'm protective of kids, but I just don't have the energy to worry anymore, so I'm creating a schedule around activities that give us a little breathing room while keeping us focused on the positive.**

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ANN ARBOR PARKS & RECREATION

If you'd like more structure to your outdoor mindfulness activities right now, there are a few City of Ann Arbor programs you can join. The Stewardship Network's Huron Arbor cluster gathers via Zoom these days for "informal discussion on a monthly topic with volunteer and professional land stewards, plus others interested in nature. Free of charge." Recent meetings included Jason Frenzel, who facilitates current and potential watershed stewards, talking about taking the long view on environmental restoration.

Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation also runs a Featured Walk of the Week through its new Park Walks program, "inviting you to get outside and take a walk in nature. You can explore the featured walks on your own or attend a hosted walk. No registration is necessary." You can log pictures with the hashtag #a2parkwalks on social media and win prizes by tracking hiking goals.

You can subscribe to City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation programming at a2gov.org. Many other environmental programs are up in the air right now, but there is a local wiki on volunteer opportunities for youth and teens at localwiki.org/ann-arbor/Volunteer_opportunities_for_youth_and_teens and learn about other opportunities for kids at www.ecocenter.org.

Hang In There, Mom and Pop

The kids might be struggling to remote school, or maybe they love it, but you're concerned life is nothing but screen time. I know. And who knows when things go back to any recognizable form of normal? For the time being, like I'm sure you are, I'm focused on family first and getting through this. I hope if you have the energy, some of these kids' activities give you some rabbit trails to follow to some enjoyable activities that are healthy, mindful, and that your kids will enjoy. Hang in there. Every storm runs out of rain. And kids socially conscious programming in Ann Arbor will again be as great as it ever was—maybe even more diverse and accessible in the long run.

> **Hang in there. Every storm runs out of rain.**

Laura K. Cowan is the Kids in The Community columnist for Crazy Wisdom Journal, and also writes the Healers of Ann Arbor column. She is a tech and wellness journalist from Ann Arbor, and also runs Cronicle Press, a tech blog and content marketing consultancy for tech startups and small businesses. You can reach her at laurakcowan@gmail.com or visit www.cronicle.press

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Ann Arbor's Little Free Libraries

The Book-Sharing Movement Goes Big-Time

Fairy Tales

By Madeline Strong Diehl

When Kathleen Wright, a beloved Ann Arbor elementary school teacher and self-confessed "bookaholic," first heard about Little Free Libraries (LFLs) in 2014, she and her husband knew immediately that they wanted to install one outside their home on the Old West Side. "I thought it was one of the most marvelous ideas I had ever heard of," said Kathleen.

The typical LFL is roughly the size of a large birdhouse, and it usually contains one shelf of books that are available for passersby to take away for free. The general guideline is "take a book, leave a book"—in other words, if you take away a book, you're expected to replenish the library and leave another book you're ready to donate. But there are no firm rules, and it's all done on the honor system.

The general guideline is "take a book, leave a book"—in other words, if you take away a book, you're expected to replenish the library and leave another book you're ready to donate.

The LFL organization informally began in 2009 when a Wisconsin man named Tod Bol built a model of a one-room schoolhouse in tribute to his mother, a teacher who loved to read. He filled it with books and put it on a post in his front yard. Soon, he was building many more and donating them to friends, neighbors, and others who requested them. The idea gained critical mass, and by 2012, with a lot of financial and logistic support, the LFL became a nonprofit organization with more than 4,000 registered "stewards," or volunteers who installed, curated, and maintained LFLs.

In 2014, when the Wrights got involved, it was possible to buy a library ready-made or as a kit. But they knew they wanted to build their own, so it would closely match the design and color scheme of their house. They knew they wanted two shelves—the lower one at eye level for children, and the upper for adults. "I have a husband who can build anything," said Kathleen, "but we were surprised how long it took. By the time we sketched it out and built it, it took several weeks." When the Wrights registered their LFL on the organization's world map in July 2014, they were told there was only one other LFL in Ann Arbor, and it was located on the far side of town.

A visit to a good LFL provides an adventure even for the most discerning readers.

Now, six and a half years later, there are more than a hundred registered LFLs in Ann Arbor, and a spokeswoman said there are probably many more. (It is up to each library "steward" to decide whether or not to register locations on the world map.) There are more than 2,100 registered LFLs mapped for the entire state of Michigan, which has the seventh highest number in the U.S. And there are more than 100,000 registered LFL book-sharing boxes in 108 countries worldwide; they can be found on every continent except Antarctica.

Kathleen Wright, who has taught in the Ann Arbor Public School District for more than twenty years, says it's almost impossible to keep the Wright's LFL stocked with good children's books. "When I run low, I put the word out that I need more," she said. Many LFLs have a reading bench nearby, and the Wrights have two—one for children and one for adults. "I love looking out my window in the summer and watching parents and kids sitting side by side and reading books together."

Supporting literacy is a big part of the LFL's mission; the website mentions that more than 30 million adults cannot read or write above a third-grade level. The nonprofit has various initiatives "to fill book deserts and place libraries where they can make a big impact."

A visit to a good LFL provides an adventure even for the most discerning readers. "I have read many wonderful books and discovered authors whom I never would have come across otherwise," said Wright.

When the pandemic hit last spring and not much was known about how Covid was transmitted, some LFLs closed out of an abundance of caution. Other stewards turned their LFLs into pantries where neighbors could donate and pick up such things as face masks, toilet paper, and food. Kathleen says she and her husband considered closing, but then decided that the pandemic was a time when people needed books more than ever. So, they put a sign on the door of their LFL that outlines what's known and not known about Covid transmission, which includes the information that not many scientists believe that the virus can survive long on surfaces like books.

Other stewards turned their LFLs into pantries where neighbors could donate and pick up such things as face masks, toilet paper, and food.

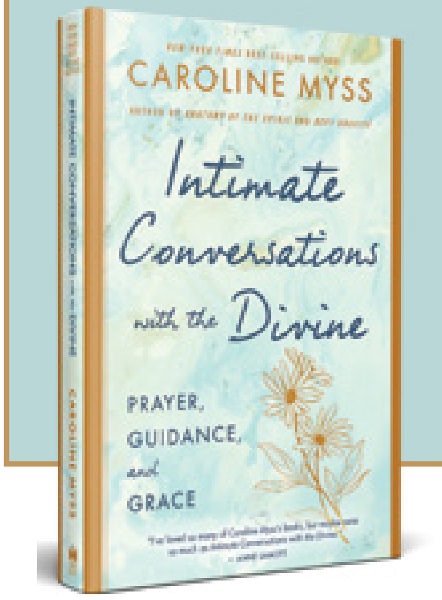
With public libraries now closed for browsing, the LFLs are the only place in town where you can look through a bunch of books and pick something out at random. My daughter Amelia came home from Chicago to shelter-in-place with us last March. She says that studying the books inside a LFL can provide insight into what people in the neighborhood are thinking about. "After a lag of a couple of months, I can find a lot of great, almost-new books about recent events like protests against police brutality and the urgent call to address climate change," she said. "The little free libraries are like a new kind of message board that have the potential to bring the community together to discuss social issues while we can't have these kinds of discussions in person right now," because of social distancing.

Sometimes Amelia will come home from a walk with a book she has been wanting and hoping to read for a long time. Whenever she shows me one of these treasures, I am reminded of when she was young and presented me with dandelions as if they were the rarest of flowers. I've always believed good books are like medicine, so the metaphor is no stretch of the imagination—after all, botanists consider every part of a dandelion to be medicinal—leaves, stem, flower, and root. So, as small as a LFL might seem, it has an outsize influence over its environment. Or, as Todd Bol, the founder of the movement said in 2018, right before his death: "I really believe in a Little Free Library on every block and a book in every hand. I believe people can fix their neighborhoods, fix their communities, develop systems of sharing, learn from each other, and see that they have a better place on this planet to live."

For more information about Little Free Libraries and how to build, buy, and install one, please see: www.littlefreelibrary.org.

Book Reviews

New Reads From Long-time Favorites


CAROLINE MYSS
Intimate Conversations with the Divine
PRAYER, GUIDANCE, and GRACE

By Catherine Carlson

Both Caroline Myss and Julia Cameron are well known authors in the self-help, healing, and spirituality genres. They both burst onto the scene around the same time, nearly 30 years ago. Since that time each of them has produced an entire shelf of books unto themselves and each became classroom teachers of their work. Coincidentally, both grew up in the Chicago suburbs. Devotees of their work can't help but wonder what else might Caroline or Julia might have to offer, so I decided to read and review their newest books.

> Devotees of their work can't help but wonder what else might Caroline or Julia might have to offer, so I decided to read and review their newest books.

Book Review:
Intimate Conversations with the Divine
by Caroline Myss

Author, and spiritual teacher, Caroline Myss was an original and powerful voice in the self-help genre back in the 1990's, beginning with books such as *Anatomy of the Spirit: The Seven Stages of Power and Healing*. Her gift of medical intuition was a new concept. Her newest release is called *Intimate Conversations with the Divine: Prayer Guidance and Grace*. The pre-press preface was written at the onset of the shift of 2020 and addresses the global Covid-19 pandemic. She's quick to point out that, "We have been living in a psychic pandemic of fear for many years," and this prayer book seeks to address that fear.

Myss is the product of a Catholic upbringing which gave her a foundation for connecting to the divine in a unique way, bridging spirituality with healing. This is the theme in all her books. Myss also teaches her work. Several years ago, at the end of her classes, Myss would share her prayers with her students. Much to her dismay, they began to request copies. Out of the many requests for copies grew the birth of this book. Sharing her own personal spiritual practice with the world was not something she ever thought she would do, but realized it was something she *had* to do.

> Sharing her own personal spiritual practice with the world was not something she ever thought she would do, but realized it was something she had to do.

According to Myss, people have been praying in one form or another for centuries, but it is a language that has become absent in our daily lives. Prayer books are not new, but Myss' own prayers may be. At first glance, I expected to see pages full of simple stanzas surrounded by white space. Instead, they are actually short chapters, 100 in total, each devoted to a relatable theme. I randomly opened to a page to see what came up (something she suggests doing). It was Prayer 39 called *Healing Night Flights,* a prayer for repairing one's "depleted soul. . . weary body and . . . burdened heart," while asleep. As we follow her conversation, she talks about the work we have to do ourselves and writes, "There is no such thing as a small act of darkness just as there is no such thing as a small act of love." There you have it. This is not a light and airy prayer book.

> The prayers read more like essays, or soliloquies on different topics, much like reading a sermon, only very intimate, deep, and relatable.

The prayers read more like essays, or soliloquies on different topics, much like reading a sermon, only very intimate, deep, and relatable. Each two-to-four-page chapter is divided into *Prayer*, *Guidance*, and *Grace,* and ends with an italicized message as in chapter 39 above, "Lord grant me the grace to awaken—truly awaken—and the courage to embrace that mystical experience*."* This is the part that is what you might expect a traditional prayer book to look and sound like. Other chapters have titles such as: *Confronting my Frightened Inner Self*, *Sharing Blessings,* and *The Gift of Aging*. What is labeled *Prayer* is essentially her conversation to the Divine about a certain subject. In the *Prayer* section of the chapter *There but for the Grace of God Go I,* she discusses her encounter with a homeless man who joins her on a park bench. He asks her for an iced tea, she agrees and offers to get him a sandwich as well. She becomes uncomfortable when he asks her to eat with him, not wanting to be alone. She obliges him and shares her—not often seen—vulnerability in this experience. She has another meeting with another woman she feels has the signature of a saint and muses as to how the Divine is choosing them these days.

The sections on *Guidance* involve Myss going deeper into the subject matter of the related Prayer. Here she asks questions and may share a relevant story. In the chapter called *Only You Could Change the World so Fast,* she says the current virus is the agent of bringing the world to a stop but not the mystical agent—the agent behind the scenes, so to speak. She says "We haven't really grasped that 'creating our own reality' is a mystical truth, not a behavioral one." The *Guidance* here is to understand the truth that we have the power to create through every choice we make.

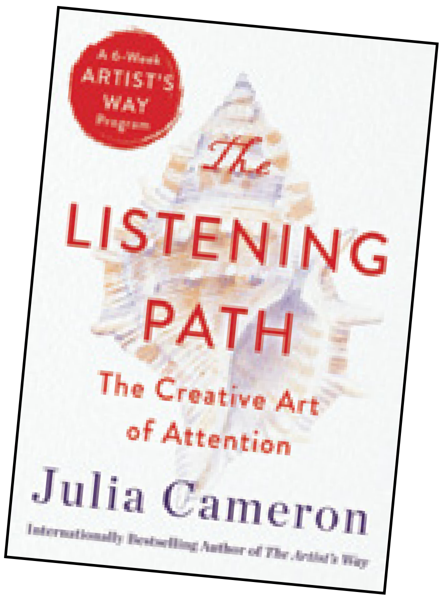
> Prayer or words, can help or heal and she defines the true meaning of prayer as "a request for help in how to see."

In the *Grace* portion of a chapter on faith she says faith and trust go hand in hand and they are the foundations of self-esteem. In typical fashion, she does not mince words. "If you cannot Trust yourself, you can never—ever—Trust another person." The thing you have to appreciate about Myss is that she's going to take you deeper than you might be comfortable with so you'll do your own inner work. She's a strict teacher and regularly raps the spiritual ruler on the reader's knuckles.

Myss makes a tight case for prayer in our lives and her book provides us with the medicine. She points out that we are in a historical crisis of sorts. Where the "majority do not know what they believe in." Humanity is vulnerable. Not knowing where we stand, we might believe the loudest, strongest voice around even if it's negative, even in the context of religion.

Prayer or words, can help or heal and she defines the true meaning of prayer as "a request for help in how to see." To find the words and the hope to guide you in this life. In this most personal work of hers yet, Myss gives us an opportunity to join her in asking for help through prayer.

Book Review:
The Listening Path
by Julia Cameron


A 6-Week ARTIST'S WAY Program
The LISTENING PATH
The Creative Art of Attention
Julia Cameron
Internationally Bestselling Author of The Artist's Way

Switching gears, readers and students of Julia Cameron's 1992 original creativity course, *The Artist's Way,* will undoubtedly have their ears perk up upon hearing about her new book, a six-week Artists Way Program titled *The Listening Path: The Creative Art of Attention*. Creativity is the foundation of Cameron's teachings and her new book builds on this with the concept of listening. She seeks to answer the question—how does listening feature into our lives as creatives?

At this point in her career Cameron is a seasoned teacher. Her long-time students and readers are seasoned as well. *The Listening Path* refines the creative process even more. The introduction explains the three main tools of *The Artist's Way*: Morning Pages, The Artist's Date, and The Daily Walk. One need not have read any of her prior books to understand these.

Morning Pages are the work portion, an opportunity for you to be heard, by you! These are three completely imperfect handwritten pages of whatever is in your head written each morning upon waking. My experience is when morning pages are done consistently, they make everything a little easier. The Artist Date brings in the fun factor. Often resisted, giving yourself this special time to focus on your inner artist, you can't help but listen. A period of strong writing followed one student's artist date to a pet store where she got to pet the baby rabbits. Lastly the Daily Walk "brings us into the present moment." We can't help but look and listen to our environment as we move through it. These three pieces are the foundation of her *Artists Way* programs.

> The first three weeks of The Listening Path are all about listening to what is in your immediate vicinity: the sounds in your environment, other people, and your higher self.

The first three weeks of *The Listening Path* are all about listening to what is in your immediate vicinity: the sounds in your environment, other people, and your higher self. Cameron writes at length about part of her day with respect to the entirety of sounds around her: The loud noise of a hail storm and the effects it has on her dog. She says by tuning out sounds we do ourselves a disservice. For example, tuning in to the alarm clock noise you despise may inspire you to take the action of getting one you like better. Liking your alarm clock sound will have the added effect of making you happier, and you will be more likely to tune in further. Listening to pleasant sounds makes *us* more pleasant. "Happiness is a primary characteristic of the Listening Path," says Cameron.

When it comes to listening to others Cameron points out there can be the tendency to interrupt, have your response ready ahead of time, or listen without saying anything. She interviews fellow artist friends and shares with us how listening factors into their own creative processes. This is a non-intimidating workbook with simple "Try this…" invitations for our ears peppered throughout. She took what she heard from her actor and writer friend and turned it into one of those suggestions. Try this: Plan to meet a friend for a chat with the intention of listening carefully to learn. Afterward, consider what you learned and discovered. It's a great opportunity to practice being curious.

Working with the previous *Artists Way* tools can make us feel more ready to listen to our higher self. Cameron shares how writing to her "inner elder," calmed her anxiety about buying a home for the first time in many years. She addressed the naysayers: the inner critic and others who claim this is just our imagination. There are a series of questions she asks herself when faced with any troubling situation, such as: "What do I need to accept?" Tuning into our intuition provides comforting guidance.

> The final chapter on listening to silence may be challenging to many. "We quake in its unexpected emptiness."

The following weeks invite us to consider something we may have never in our lives actively listened to—voices beyond our immediate environment such as listening to those beyond the veil like deceased loved ones or historical figures, and lastly, listening to silence. Here Cameron shares that she communicates regularly with close friends that have passed on. I was surprised how simple and easy she made it sound. "Can I hear from Jane?" she asks and immediately, Jane responds. Having her friends' supportive messages are encouraging.

Similarly, Cameron listens to voices of public figures that are no longer living. She says the intention is key here. Who do we admire? Cameron admires and writes to Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. He offers appreciation and reassurance of her work. Cameron has previously shared that the late famous duo—Rogers and Hammerstein, helped her write musicals. Writing music was something new that her Morning Pages suggested she try. She has now completed three musicals and two collections of children's songs. Cameron points out that to communicate with our heroes builds connections that strengthen ourselves. Why not make an attempt to listen to someone you find wise, who has all the time in the world to speak to you?

The final chapter on listening to silence may be challenging to many. "We quake in its unexpected emptiness." So many of us live with constant background noise, be it TV, radio, or even going shopping with earbuds in. Cameron encourages her silence avoiding friend to try sitting in silence for five minutes. He calls her after the experiment and reports that although it was different, he remembered something important and had some new ideas for his week. Cameron insists the silence isn't silent at all, it is filled with a benevolent presence. For those that seek silence it can also be difficult to find it, especially in the city. She suggests finding the quietest environment you can. It could be a church or a library (when open), and tuning into the silence to discover what you hear within it. After time spent in silence, our senses are undeniably sharper and more alert. As I was enjoying a bit of silence at a park recently, I picked up a safe but unpleasant burning smell from a distance which I might not have noticed otherwise.

Once I began this book, I immediately found myself paying closer attention to my environment and others. I noticed listening takes patience and time, but that's also what it gives you. On the cover of the book is a single Conch shell, a perfect illustration of a seemingly silent object found in nature—an ideal image to capture the essence of *The Listening Path.*

As it turns out Caroline and Julia *do* have more to tell us, more to teach us. These two books, unique on their own, actually fit together nicely as a pair. Each book highlights an aspect of conversation, one is about communicating, the other listening. The invitation to participate in either requires very little on our part and by all accounts seems more than worth it.

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by Vijayalaxmi

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Photo by Hilary Nichols

Namaste, Katie...

Whether you're a seasoned yogi or getting ready to roll out your mat for the first time, here you'll find a variety of useful tips from local yoga instructor, Katie Hoener.

By Katie Hoener

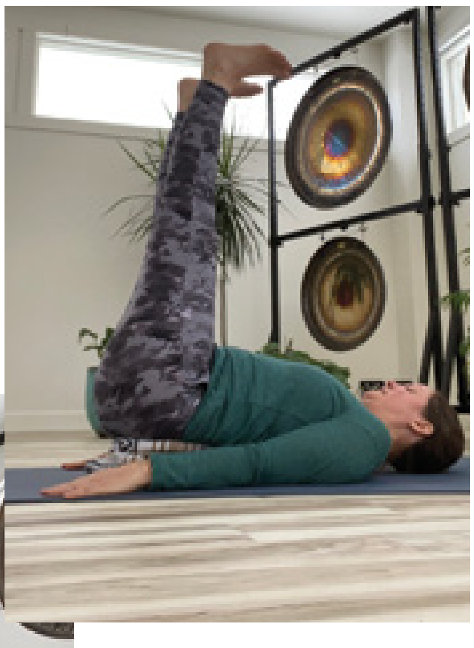
Dear Katie,

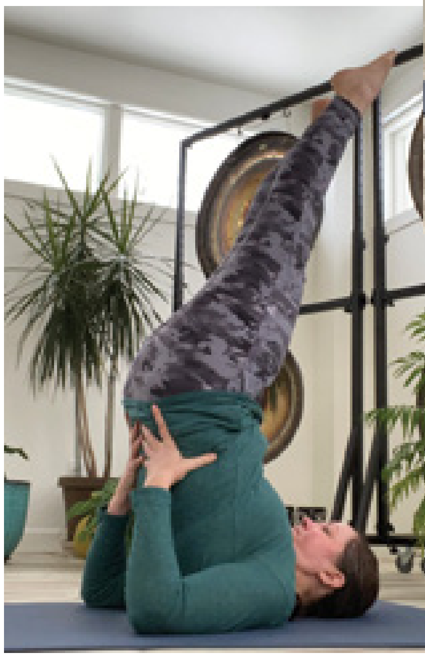
My family and I have had a challenging time, which we agree is a shared experience, and are wondering if there is a posture we can share that can bring us together, and bring our stress levels down.

Marcus, Ann Arbor

Dear Marcus,

I agree this year has been unbelievably challenging, with multidimensional trauma, and challenges coming from all directions. It can be challenging to feel reset, and at times to be set at all. Through yoga there are a number of ways that we can come into our bodies and do our best to work toward a sense of balance, even if only for a moment. One key path is to slow down, focus, and reset, through an inversion. These spaces, where the base of the spine is elevated above the base of the skull, signals to the parasympathetic nervous system to kick into gear. This part of us is the 'tend and befriend' part of the nervous system that cares and comforts. A delightful way to come together in an asana place is through a Salamba Sarvangasana, a supported shoulder stand.





Here, I offer two versions. One is using your own body, and strength to support yourself, and the other is settling into supports. Whether we are using props, or using our own body is often dependent on the day. To come into Salamba Sarvangasana we want to be comfortable on our mats, with arms planted into the mat close to the body. On an inhale, core muscles engaged, we lift the legs toward the sky, planting the hands on the low back, and cradling the pelvis. The amount of lift through the pelvis is very much up to you. There are many variations of supported shoulder stand, and you will see many that show legs and body in one line, and others with more of an angle. The most important thing is that your core muscles are engaged, and feel lifted through the legs.

The other option, often called Candlestick, places a blanket or pillow under the pelvis, and allows the legs to reach up toward the sky. If you need a bend in the knees, take that adaptation. This variation is quite restorative, and is something that I practice for a few minutes before bed on most days. Though children may love a supported shoulder stand, you may find that family time holding Candlestick can be held for a little longer, and can offer you a space to offer balance to one another.

Through yoga there are a number of ways that we can come into our bodies and do our best to work toward a sense of balance, even if only for a moment.

Namaste Katie,

You talk with many readers about the challenges of meditation, and I have been struggling. I am looking for something that I can use while at work when I cannot play a guided meditation, or use one of my other go-to tools. Do you have any suggestions during this hectic time?

Liz, Ann Arbor

Dear Liz,

This has been a time when meditation has been recommended a lot and has been more challenging than ever. I have found myself going back to the basics in many cases, as practices that are complicated or involved have, for me, felt overwhelming. In *The Science of Breath* by Yogi Ramacharaka there is a wonderful practice of pranayama that is itself meditative and fits the situation you are describing. It is called Yogic Rhythmic Breath, and involves connecting with your own heartbeat, and connecting your breath to the pace of your heart.

Find your pulse, perhaps on your wrist, or on your neck. Take a minute to find a place where this is easy, so that when you start the practice you are not searching or struggling. When you are ready you will begin counting the inhale to match six beats of your heart, allow the exhale to match six beats of your heart. Take ten breaths to feel comfortable with this practice, and if this is where you want to start, stay here. This is a beautiful way to connect deeply with yourself. If you would like to continue the practice, the space between the breath is half that of the length of the inhale and the exhale, so at this point, the count of three pulses. If the location and time allow, the length of the breath can be increased, as well as the space between. Check in that as you expand the breath you remain comfortable.

I have found myself going back to the basics in many cases, as practices that are complicated or involved have, for me, felt overwhelming.

Yogi Ramacharaka recommends that we start with twenty rounds of this breath practice, adding more rounds if time and space allow. This connection with our own rhythms draws us into a place of concentration and can become a meditative place. Connections to the breath are the foundation of a mindful practice.

Dear Katie,

Recently as part of a workshop on positive psychology we were all assigned to start a gratitude journal. I was discussing this with my partner, and they suggested that I also look into other heart chakra practices. Are there ways to expand on this gratitude work?

Dan, Saline

Namaste Dan,

I am a big fan of gratitude journals and keep one myself. As you mentioned they are a part of a growing amount of research in a number of fields, including positive psychology. The Anahata Chakra, or the Heart Chakra, is the midpoint in the traditional chakra system, with three below and three above. Gratitude work is important to cultivating an open heart and forming connections with others.

Gratitude work is important to cultivating an open heart and forming connections with others.

To build on your work of gratitude journaling, transfer this intention and energy to a meditation practice, or into an asana practice, if you find that more accessible. Breathing in feelings of gratitude and opening ourselves up to recalling moments when we feel grateful builds our own abilities to come to these feelings and sensations over and over again. As discussed in positive psychology and in yoga, there are so many negative influences and attachments impacting us and attempting to steer us away from a compassionate and loving mindset. Gratitude is a powerful way to stay open and connected to others, and to our own ability to forge deep bonds. Whether through meditating on a particular moment of gratitude, or using a gratitude mindset as a sankalpa, see if there are ways to infuse this mindset into other practices to make your heart center shine!

Katie Hoener is an RYT 500, receiving her 200 and 500 hour trainings. She is also a Licensed Master Social Worker and a partner at Verapose Yoga in Dexter (veraposeyoga.com). Please send your own yoga questions to katie@verposeyoga.com.

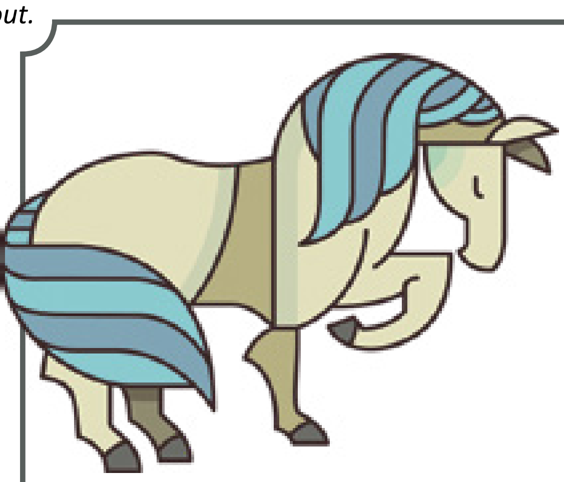
SOULS AT PLAY

Divine Order — Not Disorder

How Sarah DesJardins' Personal Journey Informs Her Equine Therapy and Energy Healing Work

By Hannah Stephenson • Photography by Mary Bortmas

(Editor's Note: There are quite a number of equine therapists, and equine-facilitated learning stables, in southeastern Michigan. One of our writers, Hannah Stephenson, suggested profiling one of them—Sarah DesJardins, who is exceptional in that she is combining equine therapy and energy healing, and working with children, adults, and families. In addition to offering energy-based equestrian therapy, she is deeply committed to offering trauma recovery services. Healing from trauma is something DesJardins knows a good deal about. On her website, she notes that she is a survivor of incest, and suffered severe physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a child, and she has had a long journey of healing. One of her life challenges has been living and working with Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) – how to understand it, how to construct a positive life with it, and how to help heal others. She is now doing ground-breaking work in this area, and readers can use the links we provide to hear her talk about it.



> I explained I had known of Sarah for a while, had heard her speak. Now, I was in the position to help spread more awareness of her mission.

As Stephenson reports, DesJardins is highly attuned, and she brings to bear intuitive and psychic capacities in reading people, their energies, and their soul work. She has also spent many years as a gardener/landscaper, and she incorporates nature, cooking, laughter and love into her healing work as the owner of Souls at Play Center for Creative Therapy.

Now 57, she was raised in New York, spent her summers in northern Michigan, and spent a few years in schools in Vienna, Austria. For more than 30 years she has lived in the Ann Arbor area, and now resides in Manchester. She also has a son, who is 31.)

Down a country road and around a corner in lovely Manchester, hot tea and home-made chocolate-chip cookies (my favorite treats) awaited my arrival at Souls at Play Center for Creative Therapy. This was my third time seeing Sarah DesJardins. The first was at the *Spring 2015 Holistic/Psychic Fair of Ann Arbor*, where as a guest speaker, she presented a powerful seminar—"Psychic Awareness: The Silver Lining of Trauma"—maxing the venue's capacity.

That experience prompted my arranging a field trip for a sample equine therapy session with my Onsted High School Psychology and Stress Management classes. While there, I watched an introverted young man (identified by the Special Education department as Emotionally Impaired) triumphantly manage a 1500 pound, 16 hands tall, magnificent Friesian horse under DesJardins' coaching. His smile lasted for weeks.

This visit would be our first in-depth conversation about how DesJardins finds joy in "helping people connect with their soul and start expressing it."

DesJardins earned her Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science from the University of Kentucky. After the sudden death of her husband in her 30s, she left the field and drew from her long-term love of gardens to begin a landscaping business. DesJardins' inspiration for each garden created was to "make people feel better and promote healing for those who had suffered trauma or loss." In the creation for others' healing, her own was nurtured.

It was also during this time that DesJardins' latent abilities to read animal, as well as human, conscious and subconscious energy surfaced. It began the exploration to help herself and others "listen to the Self where the heart is." She has since provided psychic and energy sessions for 14 years. Add this to her total 25 years of horse experience and her 10 years offering equine therapy with Friesians, and it is understandable that she was able to synthesize her skills into a ground-breaking format.

Divine Order — Not Disorder

(continued)

Clients of DesJardins have ranged from individuals and couples to parents, families, foster children, horse owners, and corporate team builders. By helping clients to increase Self-awareness, they garner a multitude of gains: peace, increased self-esteem, improved relationships, self-empowerment, hope, and the opportunity to reconnect with the ability to play—which, DesJardins believes, most adults have lost. She has found "the most direct route to the soul is through the innocence and joy of play, hence, the name of the center."

DesJardins wants "people to know the uniqueness they bring, and that the world is enriched by their presence."

Helping people on their journey of healing from eating disorders, trauma, sexual abuse, and Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder, is a special passion. By offering experiential-based creative therapies, DesJardins creates a safe, empowering environment to nourish self-discovery needed for healing.

> In its early years, the mission of Souls at Play was to offer "energetic-based, equestrian therapy through specifically designed, situation-oriented sessions."

Jennifer DeVivo, LMSW, ACSW Executive Director of Fostering Futures in Ann Arbor refers clients to DesJardins. "I am a clinical social worker who often comes across very tough cases of trauma. In the instances when I have very complicated trauma in a child or teen, and an open, willing parent who is also willing to do their own work with their child, I want them to go see Sarah. I know she will provide a clearer picture of the core issues that are standing between the family and emotional peace. I also know she will walk through the hard work of change with her clients."

DeVivo continued, "I also love to recommend Sarah to adults who feel they aren't sure what to do next in their lives, but truly want to grow. Sarah's perspective and information makes paths visible that were there all along but may have been hidden by our limiting beliefs about ourselves and life's possibilities."

Equine Assisted Learning

"Through her equine therapy, Sarah Desjardins quickly elucidated dynamics between my partner and me," said Lorri Coburn, MSW, about a personal session with Sarah. "We were able to see and experience them first-hand, as the horse mirrored our issues. As a psychotherapist myself, it's apparent the one session of Sarah's equine therapy may be equal to several sessions of talk therapy."

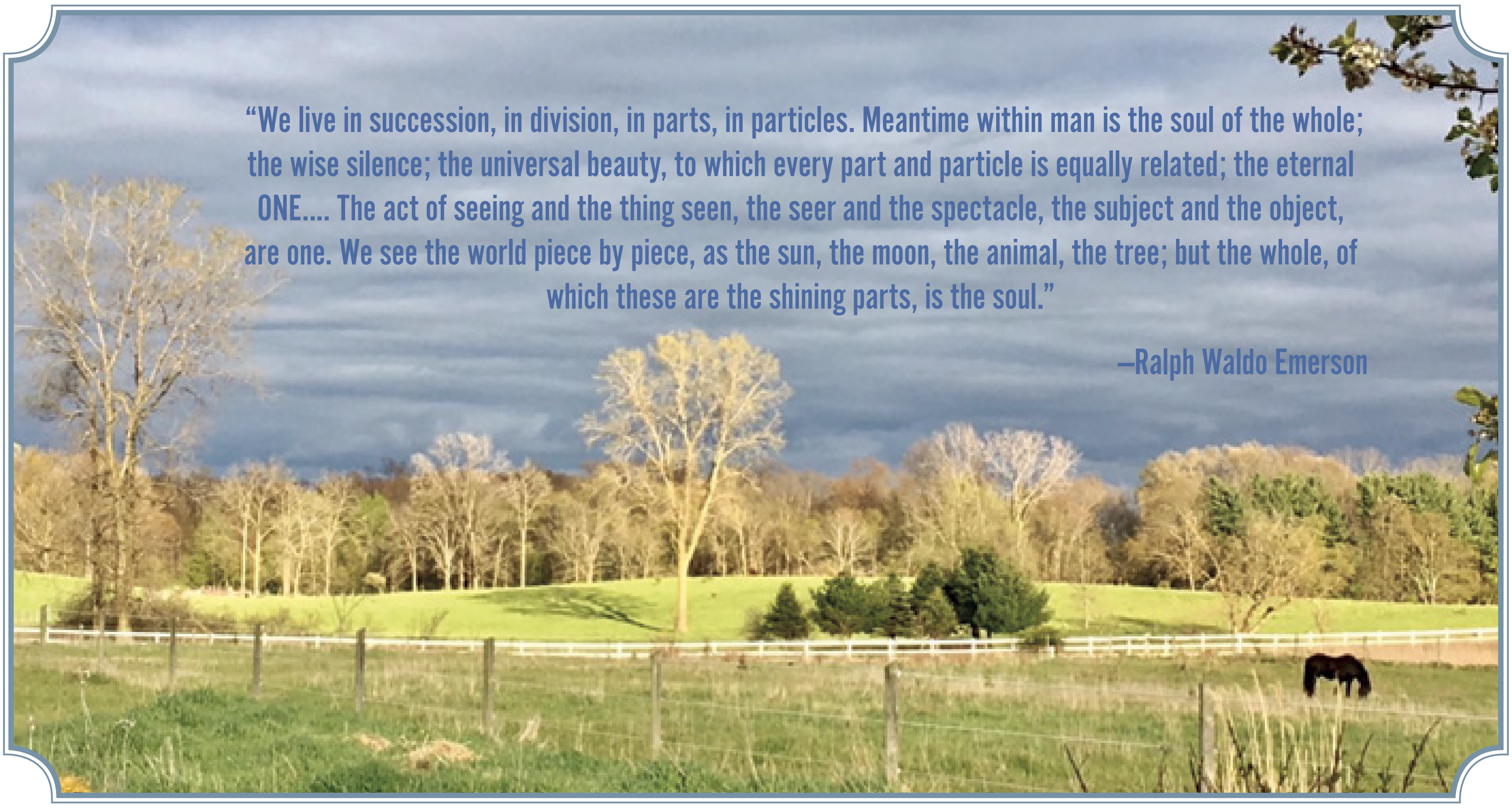
DesJardins explained that horses instinctually monitor their surroundings to stay safe and are thus experts at reading energy. Their behavior shows externally what you are feeling internally. Their reactions to a client's instruction will reveal the client's emotional, psychological, or sometimes even physical concerns. If a person gives up too easily, doubts their authority to direct others, or gives mixed signals—the horses respond accordingly.

During one session a 12-year-old boy was asked to back up a horse. The child verbalized the request, but internally doubted he could do it (he admitted during the debrief). The horse did not move. When told to repeat the command, the boy did verbalize again but with even less presence than before. Completely disinterested, the horse walked away. The child threw up his arms saying, "See I can't do anything, let's just go." He too, began walking away.

The whole interaction demonstrated that the child had little faith in himself and as soon as uncomfortable feelings surfaced, instead of being persistent or asking for help, he abandoned the situation. Instead of moving through the feelings of not being acknowledged, nor heard, he quit to avoid facing failure. This is a sample of how Equine Therapy, or Equine Assisted Learning, can bring deep internal issues to light. Once identified, the internal beliefs can be addressed.

In this case, DesJardins reoriented the child to a place of self-empowerment. Together they discussed the feelings and the self-defeating thoughts he was telling himself. Given a way to revise his self-perspective to a positive self-image along with visualizing a successful completion of the task, the boy again attempted the activity. This time, the horse responded to his direction.

DesJardins combines her personal experience and horse training with the philosophies of holistic horsepersons such as Klaus Hempfling (a specialist in communication and human movement). Like Hempfling, DesJardins does not use any means of physical forcible control. Her voice, light touch, and energetic presence provides the guidance to the animals. She is also a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, which was established in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, to foster equine therapy.



> "We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE.... The act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. We see the world piece by piece, as the sun, the moon, the animal, the tree; but the whole, of which these are the shining parts, is the soul."
>
> —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Additional Therapeutic Approaches

Working with nature has long held healing power for both emotional and physical distress. Modern research studies have verified its ability to lower heart rate and anxiety, reduce depression, and improve nervous and immune responses. DesJardins pulled from her prior landscaping business experience to design a healing garden for the Center. She also developed nature-based activities to aid clients' healing work and teach the interconnectivity of all.

In the kitchen, DesJardins has an open island for baking therapy and a side booth for crafts, art, eating, or whatever else is needed. "Kids often start singing as their inner baker comes out. They make huge cookies in whatever shape they want . . . and they are always happy when frosting cakes they themselves have made." DesJardins explains, "Baking is very grounding and offers a range of benefits like simply allowing someone to make their own choices."

"You also have to be friends with your food. People with anorexia often hate food because they view it as the enemy. Perfectionism traits are also challenged. When you are baking, you work through the process. If something doesn't work out, then they learn to shake it off. Clients learn that the Universe always give you more opportunities, so you don't have to be so hard on yourself."

Learning about energy is also offered at the Center. "Energy is the language of the universe," DesJardins offered. "We all communicate through energy whether we are aware of it or not." Small children are often already perceptive to energy, but their adults may not understand or know how to talk about it with them. So, what does that look like?

During our interview, for example, while I paused to write some notes, suddenly DesJardins asked, "Are you alright?" I realized my mind had suddenly veered off conscious note-typing to tunnel vision thinking of a friend who might benefit from her services. DesJardins had sensed a subtle energy shift in the room, despite me not changing my expression, nor pausing in typing. Similar to cancer producing a smell, she shared that certain emotions (such as aggression) also produce a subtle energetic scent. This can alert would-be victims to dangerous situations developing and provide time to prepare.

DID and Trauma

"They may or may not come out. I can hear them—a couple of them are discussing it right now. They are curious about you."

Then, just like that, there seemed to be a shimmer in front of DesJardins—like what you might see on a hot day when the air above a road becomes blurred. Her shoulders seemed broader and momentarily there was a different face in front of that of my host.

"Hello. My name is Willie." The Scottish accent was clear, and the cadence paced with care. "Can you understand me all right?" He gestured with concern to the mask on his face. Of all of Sarah's people, he has their respect as a wise elder. He had come in at birth with Sarah, knowing what was in store, and as her earliest personality, had chosen to help her in this lifetime.

He wanted to know why I was there talking with Sarah. What was my intention? He was patient and attentive. I explained I had known of Sarah for a while, had heard her speak. Now, I was in the position to help spread more awareness of her mission. With each sentence, I felt he was intensely weighing what I was saying. He was, as always, there to protect her.

I thanked him for coming out to speak to me, that I was humbled, and then… I started to tear up.

Disclosure: Tears just start flowing when I experience profound truths. In the presence of Willie—and he has his own presence—I felt extremely humbled and more than a bit awed. He was, and is, of higher energy. In those few moments, I have no doubt he energetically read more than I had said, but what I was able to vocalize was deemed sufficient.

In February of 2017, Michigan Healthy Minds television show hosted DesJardins to demystify Dissociative Identity Disorder. Additionally, she was a guest speaker at the 2021 Healing Together Conference sponsored by *An Infinite Mind* (in collaboration with Harvard Medical School's McLean Hospital). (*An Infinite Mind* is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public and professional community about trauma-based dissociation with a primary focus on Dissociative Identity Disorder in an effort to dispel the myths and stigmas attached to it.) It is an annual event for people with DID, their allies, and clinicians. While there she was filmed for use in an upcoming documentary about DID.

"Disorder" suggests there is a problem that needs fixing or inherent damage.

In Psychiatry, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) defines DID as the following: Two or more distinct identities must exist recurrently taking control of the person's behavior. During that process, it creates an inability to recall events and information beyond ordinary forgetfulness. The behavior cannot be attributed to drug use, medication side-effects, religious culture, nor childhood fantasy play. Symptoms cause significant distress or impairment to daily functioning. Most sites estimate that 1-3% of the general population may have some form of DID. Additionally, many with PTSD also experience some form of dissociation.

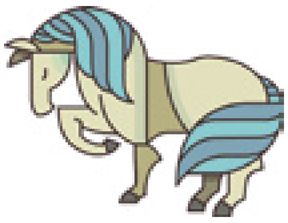
A person with DID has two or more different and distinct personalities, the person's usual "core" personality and what are known as alternate personalities, or "alters." Recent research using EEGs provides proof of different consciousnesses in control of the brain during an alter's experience. One such study provided data that brain activity normally associated with sight was absent while a blind alter was in control of the woman's body even though her eyes were open. "Remarkably, when a sighted alter assumed control, the usual brain activity returned." (Kastrup, Crabtree, Kelly, 2018).

Divine Order — Not Disorder, continued

A second study at the Swinburne University of Technology of Australia strove to directly address the “pretending rationale” by critics. Using an EEG to monitor brain waves, Neuropsychologist Joseph Ciociari compared five patients with DID and their alters to “five age-matched professional actors each pretending to have a child alter.” While being attached to the EEG, each host and alters were asked to do simple cognitive tasks. Ciociari’s study observed “significant differences in the EEG coherence analysis between the true DID core personalities and their alters, but not between the actors and their pretended personalities” (Harrison). Just as multiple personalities have different nationalities, ages, genders, sexual orientations, eyeglass prescriptions, and values, science is now documenting each have distinct brainwaves and brain area utilizations.

“DID is the Self protecting the mind and body. It is actively the Universe at work.” DesJardins explained each personality, or aspect of the Self, has a different role. Some step in to take the abuse. Some step in to clean it up and hide all evidence of it from the core person when he or she comes back to a conscious state.

> “The Universe shows you how amazing it is and how it can express itself through you.”
>
> —Sarah Desjardins.



Why is DesJardins so passionate about aiding trauma and DID survivors? At the point where she felt she had healed from the loss of her husband, DesJardins recalled, “I wanted to be of even more service to the world. I put it out there to the Universe. It was then, I had a feeling that I had to go through something else, something big.” That something was learning about her 98 verified personalities.

Sipping the tea, DesJardins laughed. “People have said to me, ‘Really, Sarah? Why not make it 99 or an even 100?’” She sees the humor, but it also speaks to the larger problem—DID is still largely misunderstood by the average person, and, surprisingly, by many therapists. This is why DesJardins and her “people” (multiple personalities or aspects of her Self) endeavor to spread awareness, and also why her Center assists therapists in learning more about DID.

“Disorder” suggests there is a problem that needs fixing or inherent damage. Without hesitation, DesJardins explains, “It’s not a disorder. What was done to me was *out of order*. It’s a defense response.” For her personally, DID has not caused difficulty with creating or maintaining an effective, successful life. Instead, it saved her life.

“Most people think the outside world is unsafe, but for me, it was the inside,” DesJardins revealed. She paused, saddened to think of the number of young people and women at home with abusers during the Covid-19 shutdown…to think of the undoubtedly rising numbers of PTSD and DID during the months of the pandemic.

DesJardins says her DID healing process was orderly but anything from linear. Imagine being introduced to someone you had no knowledge of, and then they ask you to accept a totally different self-history than what you remember living through. Add to that having to accept that what you thought you knew, about people you were close to, was inaccurate. Sometimes, grossly inaccurate, and often disturbing.

In addition to learning a college episode of memory loss was due to an encounter with a serial rapist, DesJardins became painfully aware of being a survivor of incest—including severe sexual, physical, and emotional abuse. She even coined a word—heinosity— to describe the severity of the abuse because no adequate word exists in the dictionary.

She intimately understands the process of healing from trauma. Once she discovered her own DID, DesJardins then had to assist all of her “persons” through therapy. That is one aspect laypeople would not even fathom: healing from DID requires the personalities not just to share the trauma that happened to the core personality’s body, but for the personalities to come to terms and heal from what they endured for the sake of the main person. She explains, “As you uncover each piece it all makes more sense. It is a challenging process with lots of tears. To align with the Self, we weep.”

So how does she help others heal from trauma, PTSD, and DID? Through the various creative activities and talk, DesJardins “helps them trust themselves—which is everything. When you trust yourself, your life becomes peaceful. It is all about expressing the Self—the core of it. Shining. The more one expresses the Self (in a state of self-love and joy) the more you become your pure Soul.”

DesJardins added, “The cleaner and purer your energy is—you shine.” After traditional energy work, such as Reiki or Healing Touch, it is common for the faces of both the practitioner and the client to glow a bit. But here was a new layer: In releasing emotional or mental drag, the Self itself—not just the physical package—glows.

She continued, “Trust the Universe knows what it’s doing. For a person brought up to believe there is no God, no support, I can now see all the things leading up to my spiritual awakening.” When asked to clarify her spiritual understanding, DesJardins confidently stated: “There is the All. Call it Source, the Force, God. Call it what you like.” Her tone gave me a mental image of swatting away bothersome labels. “There is this energy that loves us, and we are always trying to align with it.”

My mind recalled that after energy work, it is common for both the practitioner and the client's faces to glow a bit. But here was a new layer. In releasing emotional or mental drag, the Self itself—not just the physical package—glows.

DesJardins and her team explain the awareness that "All is the All—the Source." Each personality is actually a part of DesJardins' Self, or spirit, from a prior lifetime or from the original universal Source. Her team offered this metaphor: "If you pour water into a bottle, the water is in a new package [the bottle] for a moment in time." Simultaneously, there may still be water in the original craft as in the bottle. In both locations, the water remains water. DesJardin's 98 personalities are all still the Self that, in this lifetime, is known as Sarah DesJardins. Just as her internal Self is connected and part of the All. It is all fluid—like water—part of the flow of Source.

For years now, DesJardins and her people share co-consciousness. She never loses time nor has memory losses anymore. If clients are open to it, they have the option of working with DesJardins and her persons collaboratively. Depending upon the client's needs, whichever personality can offer the most benefit will come forward to share. DesJardins explains, "I have access to all parts of myself—and they are useful to others. They each have such amazing abilities to share."

Some intuitives refer to themselves as mediums who "channel" a specific spirit from other realms. DesJardins shrugged at the comparison. "You can say that I channel, but they are all me from prior lifetimes." Naturally, she cautions, "Personalities do not want to be treated as a side show or expect to be trotted out as a circus act."

Moving Forward at the Center

DesJardins shared her excitement over the progress made in expanding the center. It is evolving into The Souls at Play Center for Creative Therapy. It is "A non-profit center that will offer creative types of therapy (art, equine, garden, socialization therapies, and more)." The mission is to help people on their journey of healing and recovery from trauma and sexual abuse. Along with that? To help people diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID).

One of the new offerings at the center is a game that she and a client co-designed. It is a board game based on the metaphor of a journey. The client draws the path however desired. Next, DesJardins puts in spaces as safety nets or "soft spots" to land. Landing on those spots fosters conversation on how the client could create a soft spot (or comfort coping aid) in his or her own life. On other spots, the player has question prompts to answer. For DID clients, these help the child begin to talk about his or her personalities and how to interact with them. Example prompts might be, what foods do some parts like or dislike? What do you want people to know about having parts? DesJardins mentions, "It is very important to let them choose how to discuss or name their 'parts' or alters."

Pattern and card questions can be modified for different levels, ages, and so on. In both the design creation and the actual playing, healing occurs. Often the spontaneous conversations contribute just as much value. It is a means for starting to accept DesJardins' maxim, "Your life gets to get good, be good, and stay good."

By offering experiential-based creative therapies, DesJardins creates a safe, empowering environment to nourish self-discovery needed for healing.

In wrapping up, I asked if DesJardins could condense her insights to the top three concepts she thought everyone should know which would make the world a better place. She paused, but only for a moment. "First, people need to Honor the Self. People have been taught to not trust their inner voice. What does your inside tell you to do or not do? Listen to your Self. Second, people need to know they are never alone. The Universe is always there and loves you. Third, be in nature every day." She sat back in her chair.

So much more to hear, so much more available to learn at the Center. But for now, I sip my tea, thoughts simmering, and sit in gratitude for the visit.

To learn more about the center, or if you are interested in a position at the center, check out DesJardins' website at Soulsatplayequinecenter.com or call 734-417-4112 or email: beaucheme56@gmail.com .

Learn More About Sarah DesJardin

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In February of 2017, MI Healthy Minds hosted Sarah DesJardins to demystify Dissociative Identity Disorder. You can watch the 28 minute show at www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQBLDfSU2-E .

DesJardins was one of several people filmed recently for a documentary on DID. The film is entitled *I am We*, directed and produced by Ron Davis, and it is due for release this summer, 2021. Davis is collaborating with professionals of Harvard Medical School's McLean Hospital. FilmRise has acquired world-wide distribution rights to the documentary. Watch the IMDb page for the film's release at www.imdb.com/title/tt5176106/ .

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The King Family —

Half a Century of Farming, Making Music, Teaching Yoga, and Building Community

By Sandor Slomovits

We have a beautiful piece of land that we're fortunate to be living on and taking care of the best we can. And one thing we do is grow vegetables, but it's so much more than that. Not that "farmer" is a bad label at all, but we don't really think of the land as a farm in the traditional sense of the word. We just try to grow things on a few acres so we can preserve the rest of the 120 or so. You've seen this place, it's gorgeous. And I'm still in awe how nature just permeates our existence, that we live with it, and around it, and through it.

— Cathy King of Frog Holler Farm

Photography by Mary Bortmas • Editorial help from Emily Slomovits

The King family has been a prominent presence in the Ann Arbor and Southeastern Michigan community in a myriad of ways—as farmers, musicians, teachers, and more—for nearly fifty years. The roots of the King family and their Frog Holler Farm go back to 1971, to the founding of the Indian Summer restaurant in Ann Arbor. That's where Indian Summer's co-founder, co-owner, and head cook, Ken King, met Cathy Munkholm. Cathy had been hired to make salads at the restaurant and worked alongside Ken, chopping vegetables.

The organic food and locally grown movements, ubiquitous now, were brand new in '72. Frog Holler was the first organic farm in the area and grew out of Ken and his Indian Summer partners' decision to grow their own vegetables for the restaurant. "Even at that early time, before 'local produce' was a buzz word, they just didn't like the idea of those boxes of produce coming in from California," says Cathy King. They began looking for land and found an old abandoned piece of property in the Irish Hills (Brooklyn, Michigan), where there had once been an orchard. As the group started to separate into two entities, the restaurant and the farm, Cathy remembers that "Ken discovered an affinity for whatever this was, trying to grow things, even though there wasn't really anything here yet."

Both Cathy and her son, Billy, are soft-spoken, but their eyes light up when they talk about the farm. Was farming a steep learning curve? "We're still learning," says Cathy, laughing. Farming wasn't what she had planned on doing when she was younger. When she talks about growing up in Grosse Pointe, Billy jokes, "Vibrant farming community in Grosse Pointe?" (Laughter). Cathy started farming only after beginning a journalism degree at Northwestern, returning to Michigan after the passing of her father, and finishing with a liberal arts degree at the University of Michigan. Billy marvels at his dad's ability to learn on the go. "He didn't know anything, right? He just kind of figured it out. I don't know how that was even possible, but he somehow figured out how to make it work."

Continued on next page

FROG HOLLER FARM
KING FAMILY SINCE 1972
IRISH HILLS MICHIGAN
ORGANIC
froghollerorganic.com

The King Family

Half a Century of Farming, Making Music, Teaching Yoga, and Building Community

Continued from previous page

Sandor Slomovits: What was that like, deciding to leave the relative safety of steady jobs and sharing the responsibility of running Indian Summer with other people, and then having to be responsible for it all?

Cathy King: You know, Ken thought that this land was a great growing area, that we should grow our own food for the restaurant. Which was a crazy idea, but it was the early seventies and people still had a lot of crazy ideas. The group [that ran Indian Summer] founded the farm in order to grow produce for the restaurant. So, it wasn't scary to make that decision because there was going to be this connection of restaurant and farm; the restaurant would support the farm. Then it became obvious that you can't develop a farm out of an abandoned piece of land. There was nothing here except the natural beauty of the land. There was no electricity, no well, no equipment, there was nothing, no experience, except Ken had always had a garden. You couldn't do both (farm and run the restaurant). Ken became drawn to the farming and felt he had to give up his involvement in the restaurant. He never expected the person who ended up with the most shares in the restaurant to sell it. But that's what happened. So, then we really were on our own, [because] we didn't have the restaurant buying anything that we grew. The partners all fell away and it was just Ken and I here, and we were too committed to not do this. But there were some lean years, let's say.

Sandor Slomovits: Tell us about those lean years.

Cathy King: We really didn't know what we were doing. When the restaurant was supporting the farm, we were able to put in a well, so at least we had a well, and could buy a tractor. But the land was so undeveloped. It was just wild. We were hacking away at tree stumps and living really simply. I mean, we lived in the cabin and…

Sandor Slomovits: Was the cabin already there?

Cathy King: Yes. It was built by the people we bought the land from, Dr. Robert Gesell and his wife, Cora Lees. He was a U-M professor, they lived in Ann Arbor, and this was their retreat. They were conservationists and Dr. Gesell, in 1952 publicly came out against vivisection for research. That indicated their attitude toward life, people, justice for animals, and the earth. We felt like we didn't just buy a piece of land. We sort of made an agreement to take care of the land and the animals.

The land was really special. It was far from Ann Arbor, and we were driving back and forth to the restaurant, back to this no electricity place. [We lived] in the cabin, trying to figure out how to make a fire and warm ourselves up, and then go back to the restaurant in the morning. It sorted itself out. It was a relief to stay here, but we were always sorry that it meant the end of Indian Summer, which was a lovely institution.

Sandor Slomovits: When did it end?

Cathy King: It might have been '76. It didn't last very long. That's why it was named Indian Summer. Ken named it that, because it'd be really nice, but not last very long. I didn't think he knew how or why it would end, but what he said was prophetic.

Sandor Slomovits: How old were you and Ken in '72, when you moved to the farm?

Cathy King: (Laughter) I think I was 24. Ken was almost 30. He was all grown up. He seemed like he knew what he was doing. He was kind of an elder, he wasn't afraid to try things.

Ken and Cathy King, and son

For many years we were the only organic farm. It still feels recent to me that there are so many other organic farms now.
—Billy King

Sandor Slomovits: When did you start bringing your vegetables to the farmers market in Ann Arbor?

Cathy King: First we went to Saline to try it out and that was experience, but it wasn't many sales. Then we started in Ann Arbor on a Wednesday because we were sort of in awe of the Ann Arbor Farmers Market. Then we ended up going on a Saturday with lettuce. We had a very small sign that said 'organic' and the lettuce just flew off the table… it was probably 35 cents, three for a dollar. (Laughter) But we realized that was the market.

Billy King: For many years we were the only organic farm. It still feels recent to me that there are so many other organic farms now.

Sandor Slomovits: Do you think that the people who started organic farms in the area were influenced by you?

Cathy King: I think it was kind of the mood of the times. There was a while, maybe in the eighties and nineties, when there was no interest. Then, in the early 2000s there was Barbara Kingsolver and Michael Pollen, and the interest came back around. I don't think it had a whole lot to do with us except, we were still there. We hadn't given up. Now of course there's much more awareness and appreciation of small farms and locally grown produce.

Billy King: Although it was always decent for us.

Cathy King: Yeah. Well, 'cause we didn't need that much.

Billy King: We had maybe developed a loyal customer base.

Somebody heard about an old cider press and we said, okay, we'll try it and Ken sort of put it back together again.
—Cathy King

Cathy King: But we did press cider, for a good while. There used to be apples on the farm. We thought we could bring them back organically, these old trees that were planted in World War II, but we couldn't. So, then we bought apples. That was like a factory job, driving around buying apples. Ken was working in an unheated cider area in our barn. It didn't even have walls, just had plastic.

Billy King: That paid the bills.

Cathy King: Yes. That was how we could stay here in those early days because we couldn't grow enough to pay the land contract or feed ourselves.

Billy King: How many years did the cider production last?

Cathy King: At least fifteen years, maybe even longer. Somebody heard about an old cider press and we said, okay, we'll try it and Ken sort of put it back together again. It was nothing like the modern cider presses, but it made really good cider. We took the cider to the Del Rio, Seva, Applerose, and we sold it at the market. That was fortunate even though, again, we didn't know what we were doing. When we could stop doing that, it was a big relief because it was very physically demanding.

Sandor Slomovits: Tell us about your CSA.

Cathy King: We'd been taking our produce to the Ann Arbor Farmers Market for years when CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) became popular, so we were late adapters. The basic idea is a commitment from members at the start of the year to use what's in season and abundant. This gives security to farmers that face the unpredictability of weather, pests, and customer demand. Members say it saves them time shopping, encourages them to try new things, and ensures that they will get a great selection of produce without having to 'beat the crowds.' We started small, about 25 families in 2008, which grew to 60 in a few years. We took a break from the CSA for the next few years because our growing space is limited, and our time was split between the farm and Holler Fest.

Sandor Slomovits: Yes, Holler Fest. Many people know your family as farmers, but many also know you Billy, as a musician, and plenty remember the King Brothers—you and Kenny playing and recording music when you were barely in your teens. And then there's Holler Fest, the music festival you've been hosting at Frog Holler for many years. So, let's talk about all that music. It started with Ken, right?

Cathy King: Yeah. I often say he really considered himself a musician more than a farmer.

> **I think he (Ken King) was always trying to elude a label. If you called him a musician he'd say, 'I don't know, I'm a philosopher.'**
>
> **—Billy King**

Billy King: I think he was always trying to elude a label. If you called him a musician he'd say, 'I don't know, I'm a philosopher.'

Cathy King: If you called him a philosopher, he'd say, 'no I'm a farmer,' but certainly he wanted to include musician.

Sandor Slomovits: Did he play the Ark and other places, or was it more informal than that?

Billy King: He didn't perform very often, if at all. He was always writing songs and playing them around the house and at one point he decided to go to a studio. This was something he'd kind of always wanted to do, and it was way out of his comfort zone as a singer, to be in that environment. So, I'd say the result was not super flattering, but nonetheless, it showed that he had some ambition about his music. He tried to send it around to publishers, which is, you know, a wretched thing to do.

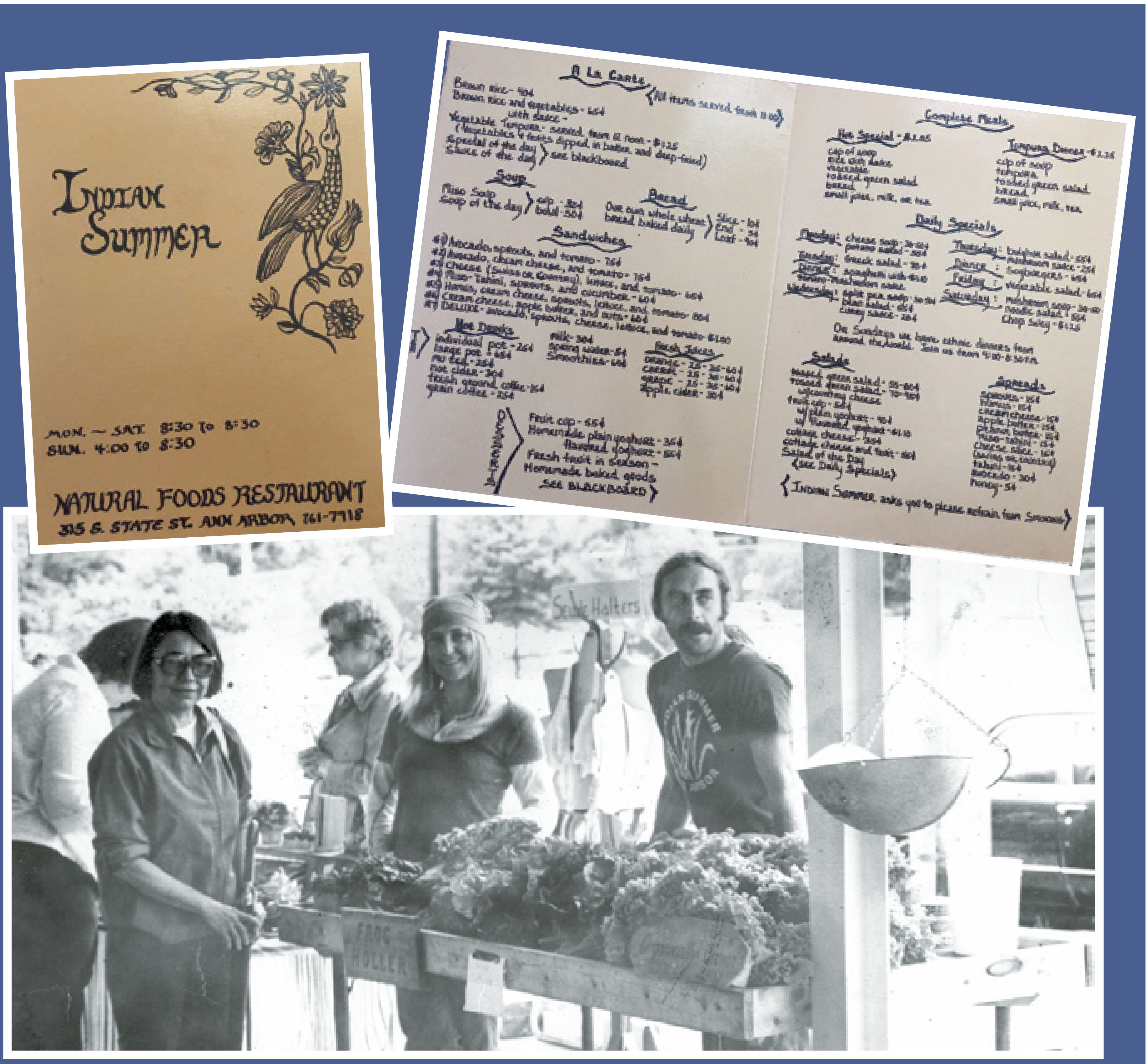
Sandor Slomovits: Yes, I do know! (Laughter)

Billy King: After that he was probably feeling like he hadn't been able to deliver the songs the way he would have liked to, so he ended up buying recording equipment. He came home with a cassette four-track recording studio. This is generally the way he would go about everything, 'I'm just going to figure out how to do this myself.' He was going to record his songs, and my brother and I quickly took charge of this new toy.

Cathy King: You took it!

Billy King: Kenny and I started recording our own songs.

Continued on page 70



Indian Summer

MON. — SAT. 8:30 to 8:30
SUN. 4:00 to 8:30

NATURAL FOODS RESTAURANT
315 S. STATE ST. ANN ARBOR 761-7918

A La Carte {All items served from 11:00}
Brown rice - 40¢
Brown rice and vegetables - 65¢
with sauce -
Vegetable Tempura - served from 12 noon - $1.25
(vegetables & fruits dipped in batter and deep-fried)
Special of the day
Sauce of the day } see blackboard

Soup
Miso Soup
Soup of the day } cup - 30¢ bowl - 50¢

Bread
Our own whole wheat bread baked daily } Slice - 10¢ End - 2¢ Loaf - 40¢

Sandwiches
#1 Avocado, sprouts, and tomato - 75¢
#2 Avocado, cream cheese, and tomato - 75¢
#3 Cheese ([illegible]), lettuce, and tomato - 65¢
#4 Miso-Tahini, sprouts, and cucumber - 60¢
#5 Hummus, cream cheese, sprouts, lettuce, and tomato - 80¢
#6 Cream cheese, apple butter, and nuts - 60¢
#7 DELUXE - avocado, sprouts, cheese, lettuce, and tomato - $1.00

Hot Drinks
individual pot - 25¢
large pot - 65¢
[illegible] - 25¢
hot cider - 30¢
fresh ground coffee - 15¢
grain coffee - 25¢

milk - 30¢
spring water - 5¢
Smoothies - 60¢

Fresh Juices
orange - 25 - 35 - 60¢
carrot - 25 - 35 - 60¢
grape - 25 - 35 - 60¢
apple cider - 30¢

Desserts
Fruit cup - 65¢
Homemade plain yoghurt - 35¢
flavored yoghurt - 65¢
Fresh fruit in season -
Homemade baked goods
SEE BLACKBOARD

Complete Meals
Hot Special - [illegible]
cup of soup
rice with sauce
vegetable
tossed green salad
bread
small juice, milk, or tea

Tempura Dinner - [illegible]
cup of soup
tempura
tossed green salad
bread
small juice, milk, tea

Daily Specials
Monday: cheese soup [illegible] potato salad [illegible]
Tuesday: Greek salad [illegible]
Dinner: spaghetti with [illegible] tomato-mushroom sauce
Wednesday: split pea soup [illegible] [illegible] salad [illegible] curry sauce [illegible]
Thursday: bulghur salad [illegible] mushroom sauce [illegible]
Dinner: Soyburgers [illegible]
Friday: vegetable salad [illegible]
Saturday: mushroom soup [illegible] noodle salad [illegible] Chop Suey [illegible]

On Sundays we have ethnic dinners from around the world. Join us from [illegible] P.M.

Salads
mixed green salad [illegible]
tossed green salad [illegible] w/ [illegible] cheese
fruit cup [illegible]
w/ plain yoghurt [illegible]
w/ flavored yoghurt [illegible]
cottage cheese [illegible]
cottage cheese and fruit [illegible]
Salad of the Day
(see Daily Specials)

Spreads
[illegible]
Hummus [illegible]
cream cheese [illegible]
apple butter [illegible]
peanut butter [illegible]
miso-tahini [illegible]
cheese slice [illegible]
[illegible]
tahini [illegible]
avocado - 30¢
honey - 5¢

{Indian Summer asks you to please refrain from smoking}

The roots of the King family and their Frog Holler Farm go back to 1971, to the founding of the Indian Summer restaurant in Ann Arbor.

The King Family

Continued from page 69

Sandor Slomovits: How old were you?

Billy King: I was ten when I started recording, and by the time I was eleven, we were performing all over Ann Arbor.

Cathy King: Your first cassette was when you were eleven. Kenny was seven. They were home-schooled and we tended to trust them with expensive equipment. (Laughter) We knew they would do good things with it.

Sandor Slomovits: This was in 1988?

Billy King: Yeah. Actually, we'd started to record before this four-track. We had miscellaneous tape decks and I found a way to make them work as multi-track by playing back what I'd recorded and singing to it—very old school. But once we got this four-track, it's like the door opened. We had a little drum machine and a keyboard, and I just took to it very quickly.

Cathy King: Ken did get his cassette recording finally, didn't he?

Billy King: He was so much less comfortable recording. I think his best musical moments were probably either in his room, just banging out songs, or some shows he played where he really was able to connect with listeners. But I have a lot of recordings I still hope to make available at some point.

Sandor Slomovits: Did your dad teach you guitar, or did you teach yourself?

Billy King: I guess I resisted input from him, probably picking up on his self-guided, self-teaching mentality. I wanted to teach myself. (Laughs)

Cathy King: You were just around him doing music.

Billy King: I started on piano actually, just feeling it out, and then quickly switched to guitar. But I didn't bother with chords. I just played the top four strings where chording is very simple. When I finally sat down with a book of chords, it was just adding to what I already knew.

Kenny King is the middle brother, four years younger than Billy, and Edwin King is the youngest of the three. On Saturdays at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market, the three of them are often among the crew manning the Frog Holler stall. Kenny played a lot with Billy when they were growing up and I wondered what role music played in his life now.

Sandor Slomovits: Kenny, you played a lot with Billy when you were growing up, I remember seeing your cassettes for sale at the People's Food Co-op, and even a couple of years ago I recall seeing you in Chelsea playing bass at a gig with Billy, my daughter Emily, and a few other people. Would you talk about music in your life now?

Billy King

> I was introduced to music, to performing, when I was pretty young. In my teens I stopped doing that and I don't feel like taking the stage anymore. I can fill in sometimes when there isn't someone else to do it. (Laughter) But I don't feel like being center stage.
>
> —Kenny King

Kenny King

Kenny King: These days, I feel more comfortable in a less visible role. The performing that I did with Billy, as the King Brothers, that was a long, long, time ago. I was introduced to music, to performing, when I was pretty young. In my teens I stopped doing that and I don't feel like taking the stage anymore. I can fill in sometimes when there isn't someone else to do it. (Laughter) But I don't feel like being center stage.

Sandor Slomovits: What about you, Edwin?

Edwin King: I never picked it up. I enjoy it [music] but I managed to dodge that particular talent. (Laughter) To the best of my memory, I think I played one show with them. I think I played drums for a school sock hop. That was the full extent of my performance career. I let them have their thing and found my own.

His own thing includes playing speed chess online, he was the concurrent state chess champ for elementary and middle school, and for years was on the winning volleyball team for Manchester rec leagues. His mom, recognizing her sons' reticence when it comes to self-promotion, also added, "Kenny is visually artistic (he won't admit that now so good luck exploring it!) but it led to his attending and getting a degree in Graphic Design from the College for Creative Studies in Detroit."

In the late 1980s, when Billy and Kenny began playing in public and recording, the King family started hosting occasional informal open mics on their front porch, and later in their barn. "We'd have a party with music, with jamming, very casual," says Billy. "Holler Fest was such a major leap from that, but that was the seed, having music in the barn."

Since 2007, Holler Fest's inaugural year, the music festival on the Frog Holler Farm grounds has grown in both size and reputation. It's now one of the premiere folk and roots music festivals in Michigan, mentioned in the same breath as Wheatland, Blissfest, Hiawatha Traditional Music Festival, and Farmfest. Featuring a format similar to those and other music festivals, Holler Fest offers concerts, including ones especially tailored to children, as well as workshops on instruments, song and poetry writing, and more. Holler Fest primarily presents Michigan performers and has arguably the most beautiful natural setting and the best food of any music festival. For many in Southeast Michigan, musicians and music fans alike, it's become a cherished annual goodbye-to-summer tradition.

"It was, to a large extent, Kenny's idea," says Billy. "He had been studying at CCS (College for Creative Studies). He came back to the farm after that and was maybe looking at it with a different perspective. He'd also been to Bliss Fest in July 2007.

When he came back, he looked at our land with fresh eyes and said, 'You know, we've got a perfect venue for something like these music festivals that happen in Northern Michigan.' Since it also happened to be the 35th anniversary of the farm, he said, "There's a good excuse to throw a bigger party than we normally throw."

When I talked with Kenny later and relayed what Billy said, he offered a slightly different, and typically self-effacing take on what happened. "Well, you know, I wouldn't take credit. Maybe we were all sitting around and maybe I was the first person to say the word festival. I'm not sure. Having people out, sharing music on the porch, in the cabin, that kind of community was already part of what we considered the farm to be about. I guess I thought maybe we could expand that community a bit and do something a little bit larger."

Billy King: We didn't have to do too much clearing [that first year] but a lot of mowing. Building a stage had to happen in like a month's time. (Laughter) We had neighbors who helped and it all just kind of came together once the seed of the idea was planted. It was so small, but still leaps above what we'd done before. It was just one day, we had four or five bands lined up to play. I think we had 300 people.

Cathy King: But we didn't expect that many. I remember we didn't have a kitchen. We just brought some food that we had made somewhere. We were serving out of a tent and I was just madly serving, and somebody said, 'stop a minute and look up.' And the food line, it just stretched away from the tent up and over the hill. And I realized, that people really had come.

Billy King: And then everyone was saying, 'So, see you next year.' And we were like, 'Wait, what? Okay.' (Laughter) We were just trying to keep it small.

Cathy King: Yeah, but you changed it to three days, the second year.

Sandor Slomovits: And now you have four stages; the main one at the foot of a natural bowl amphitheater is a perfect place for playing, listening, or dancing to music. But my favorite is in the small stone cabin that you, Cathy, and Ken lived in when you first moved to the property.

Billy King: By now we're close to 2,000 people, that's people on the land, not paying attendees, that's musicians, volunteers, everybody.

Cathy King: We didn't promote it for a long time. We still do very limited promotion.

I asked Edwin and his partner, Emily Foley, about their roles in Holler Fest. "Well, my role has generally been to do all the farm stuff while everyone else is doing festival things," says Edwin. Emily, whose day job is in the film industry as Head of Development at Hear/Say Productions has caused her to miss some years of the festival, adds, "I don't have a specific role." Which actually means that she wears a variety of hats in preparing for the festival, generally doing what needs to be done. "For the first twelve years that we did the festival we still went to market on the weekend of Holler Fest," says Edwin, "Which was crazy! (Laughter) We were harvesting while everybody else was working on the festival. I kind of enjoyed it. I found it meditative just to be out there on my own and, you know, I get done what I get done. I was always very relieved to not be as stressed as everybody who was working on the festival seemed."

***

Sandor Slomovits: So, Billy, are you a farmer, a musician or…

Billy King: I don't think it's being difficult of me to say that I feel like I'm a homesteader or something…

Sandor Slomovits: Like your dad, you're refusing to be pinned down.

Billy King: Well, I don't think it's necessarily to be difficult or to resist a label. I just don't think it would be fair or accurate to say I'm a farmer because I do so many other things, and some of them, like music, I would consider a part time job. On a farm you're required to be a builder, an electrician, and a general problem solver. So, I don't really identify so much as a farmer, but I'm okay with it. It doesn't bother me.

Cathy King: When you say farm, especially in this culture where farms are no longer very present in the consciousness, people see corn, they see tractors…

Billy King: Animals. Everyone thinks of animals.

Cathy King: Yeah, beef cattle or something. I feel like we live on the land. We have a beautiful piece of land that we're fortunate to be living on and taking care of the best we can. And one thing we do is grow vegetables, but it's so much more than that. Not that "farmer" is a bad label at all, but we don't really think of the land as a farm in the traditional sense of the word. We just try to grow things on a few acres so we can preserve the rest of the 120 or so. You've seen this place, it's gorgeous. And I'm still in awe how nature just permeates our existence, that we live with it, and around it, and through it.

Without sounding too precious, I think the life that we have designed at Frog Holler stems largely from a space of unknowing (which can also read as insecurity). I think Ken really set the idea of the value of creativity in motion. We certainly never had a "business plan" and, while being firmly planted in place and dedicated to growing good food, Ken considered himself a scholar, a musician, a writer, and an artist as well.

Sandor Slomovits: Speaking of creativity in motion, Cathy you've been practicing and teaching yoga for many years.

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Cathy King: I was taking yoga out here, but I also took a class in Ann Arbor because some friends said I should take a class from Barbara Linderman. She had been teaching at the YMCA but moved her classes to the Friends Center. She was going to be taking a year off while she studied psychology and she needed some people to take her classes. To this day, I do not know why she asked me to teach. I really learned to teach by the seat of my pants and also by having some really good examples, Barb Linderman and Ron Chalfant, who also taught in Ann Arbor. I didn't take a teacher training or anything, Barbara felt that I had some interest, so she asked me to teach a class. I did, and it kind of clicked. Then, along with the other teachers she asked to cover her classes—Lynette Smith, Martha Laatsch, and Jonathan Tyman—we decided that we needed a name. The four of us met with Barb at the Gazebo in Manchester, we sat around and brainstormed, laughed at ridiculous suggestions, and tried again, laughed some more until someone blurted out Inward Bound and Barb said, 'I think that's it.'

Continued on page 72

Emily Foley
Cathy King

The King Family

Prior to that, when he [Ken King] was very much with it and capable, I couldn't imagine how we would function without his involvement and leadership, because the way he would work was all just in his head.

— Billy King

Continued from page 71

We met at the Friends Center where Barb and her husband had a long-time affiliation. I am grateful for my early students, that they didn't get damaged. (Laughter) I learned so much as I went. I continued to study myself and then just learned from my students. It was a real passion.

> **To me, designing a yoga class is a creative opportunity, drawing on the students' ability and interest, my personal interests, the cultural milieu at the time, and that great creative mystery.**
>
> **—Cathy King**

Sandor Slomovits: When did you start practicing yoga?

Cathy King: I sort of studied yoga off and on all my life. I had a friend, DorothyAnn Coyne, who lived out here and she and her husband, Bernie, had built a healing center. They called it Sunnyside and they had a beautiful room where she and I were practicing teaching. (Bernie passed away a few years ago.) We had the two of us, and three people came to the class. That was a good ratio of teacher to student while we learned. This was in the early nineties, probably '92, '93. The King brothers were playing, I was teaching yoga and I think we were just able to stop doing cider, and 1995 is when Inward Bound became an entity with a name. It was a very creative, rich time. I taught there until 2009, when Ken passed away.

Sandor Slomovits: Do you still practice?

Cathy King: Yeah, not as much as I should, in the summer…

Sandor Slomovits: Farming is your yoga.

Cathy King: Yes, but it's really in me. When I stopped teaching at Inward Bound, I was also still teaching through the Washtenaw senior program, so I was teaching in Manchester, Saline, and Chelsea. When I stopped doing that, I was slowly shedding driving around and teaching yoga, I was just teaching in Brooklyn. Then we remodeled our barn and the idea was I was going to teach in the barn on the farm, and then the pandemic happened, and I'm not teaching at all, but I hope to again someday. I certainly believe in the value of it.

Billy King: We would integrate it into the music—we used our music for classes. There was a lot of crossover. My dad was involved and there were performances.

Cathy King: I had a group called Still Moving Yoga Dance Group. I had access to this wonderful original music. There were maybe eight or nine people willing to do these things with me. We performed with Billy and Kenny at Performance Network, and at different yoga studios.

Sandor Slomovits: I've seen videos of some of those shows. The way you combined yoga, dance, Billy and Kenny's music, humor, and storytelling was really wonderful. I'm sorry I never got to see them live.

Cathy King: The Yoga Dance was separate from my classes, but I often use music with the postures. Music takes the consciousness into a whole new place. To me, designing a yoga class is a creative opportunity, drawing on the students' ability and interest, my personal interests, the cultural milieu at the time, and that great creative mystery. You have to sort of go into that unknowing space to allow something to emerge. I don't ascribe to any system or way to encapsulate what I do or how I teach. I try to be present to my students.

Sandor Slomovits: I've avoided asking, and I certainly understand if you don't want to talk about it, but Ken's passing must've been an enormous shock for all of you. If you're willing to talk about that, I would appreciate hearing.

Cathy King: Thank you. I don't really know what to say.

Billy King: Well, I think when you're in the middle of running the farm, you have no choice but to keep running. For at least two years prior to him passing, I was the one who mainly worked with my dad. Toward the end, I was the one that basically kept him from hurting himself. He was really struggling and trying to do what he'd always done.

Cathy King: Hurting himself being on equipment that he shouldn't have been on.

Billy King: Yes. Those were challenging years, especially the one before he passed, because I was trying to keep the farm going and take care of him. At some point we knew what was happening (that he was dying of cancer), not that we were necessarily processing it, it takes time to process, but kind of what we were going to be dealing with, and we just had to keep going. Prior to that, when he was very much with it and capable, I couldn't imagine how we would function without his involvement and leadership, because the way he would work was all just in his head. He didn't do things so that other people might have insight into how he was making decisions, or why things were happening. That kind of made it a mystery to us, but once we had to take the reins, we quickly found our own way, we got very organized. We started keeping notes for everything. That's how we were able to bring more people in. I think the summer after [he passed] we had quite a large crew working on the land with us. Kenny was very instrumental in that effort to bring more people in.

For my dad, it would have been too difficult because he kept so much with his work in his head that it was a distraction to have other people hanging around, needing direction. The only people he could work with were his sons.

Cathy King: I think the other thing Billy did right away is he spent some money and bought two big tractors?

Billy King: One big tractor…

Cathy King: And another newer one, right?

Billy King: Yeah. The next year.

Cathy King: And put in some irrigation. I just feel like Ken sort of functioned from those lean years when we had nothing and everything was just bobby pins and string, you know, just tied together. We were not in debt, but we were not that efficient either. We needed to make some investments.

Kenny King: Our dad was such an energetic person and he wasn't ready to go. He was the driving force on the farm and he made the tough decisions as long as he could—working non-stop most of the time. We were caught off guard and found ourselves doing what we could to adapt as his health deteriorated. Fortunately, Billy had learned a lot about farm equipment, Edwin was doing the greenhouse starts, I had a knack for records, and our mom knew the rest. The time of his passing marked the start of a new phase for Frog Holler—the festival was just beginning to take off and we started to bring in more people as farm interns and festival volunteers. The community expanded and became more multigenerational, so we had a lot to keep us busy.

Our dad had the vision for this farm and the determination to make it happen, along with our mom and very few others. We have taken that foundation and expanded it, made it more efficient and a bit easier. His approach was one of sheer will, rather than careful planning, and he had a very personal style that few could follow. He kept track of everything in his head, worked with unreliable equipment, and did a disproportionate amount of the labor himself—so we quickly realized that we had to update some of the tools and techniques in order to continue.

He had a big presence at the market and our customers miss him. They often tell me that he was the one that helped them start gardening, or eating more healthfully, or talked with them about the concerns facing our society. He was known for being really generous with his time and inventory which established trust and goodwill that continues to this day.

On a personal level, the death of those close to me is something that I imagined in the distant future—until it became immediate. I often wonder what it would be like if he was still around, and what he would think if he could see the farm now—similar, but different from how he left it. As his passing grew imminent the question, "how could we continue without him?" became "how could we not?" We had market two days after his death and it seemed like the natural place to be.

Billy King: I think over time we would be reminded of this major change. There were obviously times that were very sad. I think the thing I've missed the most was his music, his passion for music and having that inspiration, the backdrop of that inspiration. I sometimes still don't know where I find that now. It's not something I could replace.

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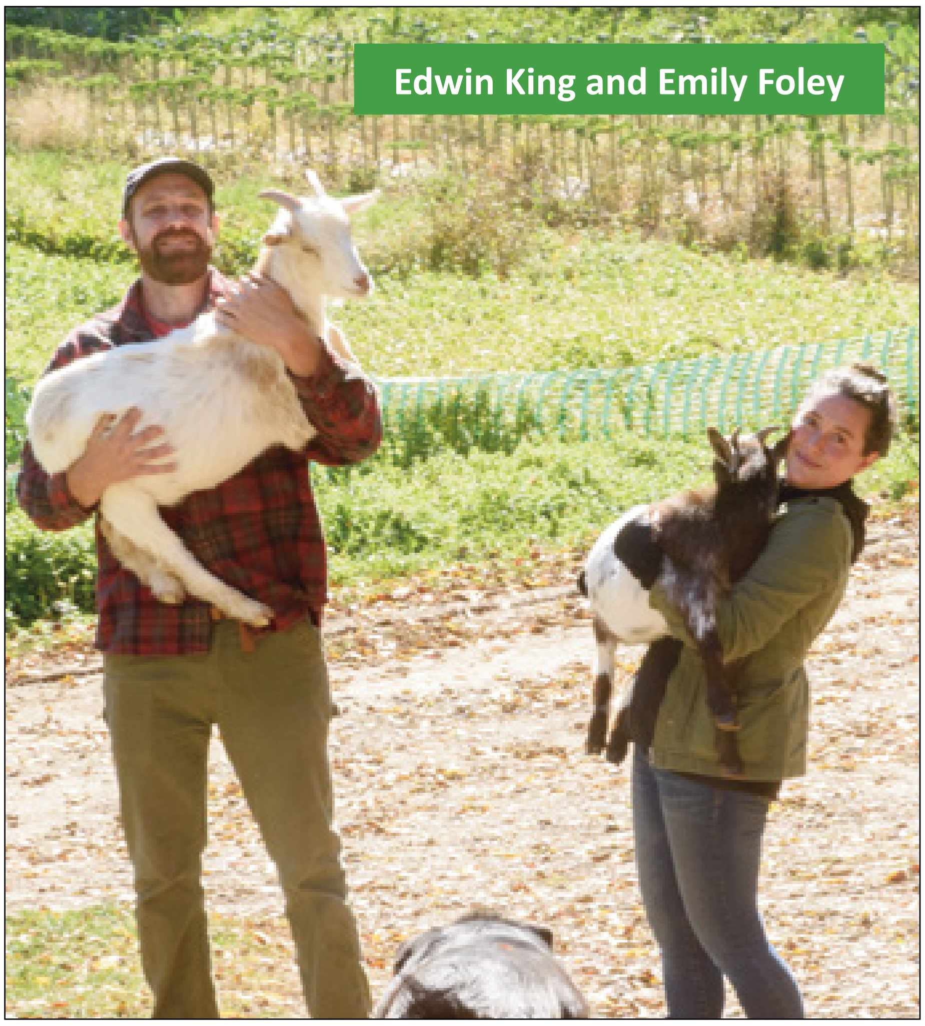

Edwin King and Emily Foley

Frog Holler Farm

Organic plant starts
April - June

Organic produce
June - October

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Pre-order and curbside pickup available
www.froghollerorganic.com

Sandor Slomovits: How has the pandemic affected you?

Billy King: You know, being out where we are, we don't feel it as much. The work has not been less. In fact, the demand for food has just increased across the board in our circle of small farms. We've been very, very busy with farm related work and finding ways to get the food to people. That was very uncertain at the beginning [of the pandemic] and has worked out via online delivery and pre-orders, and now the farmers market, as well as our CSA.

Kenny King: On a daily basis it's kind of life as usual. We try not to have as many people coming to the farm as in a normal year; maybe not quite as many interns or volunteers, but we still had a small number.

The big effect of Covid that I have felt is being reminded of the importance of local, nutritious, and consciously grown food in our community. We were happy to be able to provide online ordering and contact-free delivery—that felt like very essential services under these circumstances. In particular, delivering garden plants to customers' doorsteps; we knew that we were helping to provide food for the whole year—a great feeling! We aren't alone. I see other farms developing innovative ways to provide food under these tough conditions. Ann Arbor values good food and gladly supports their food growers, and this crisis has reaffirmed that.

Edwin King: We had to get more tech savvy very quickly, which Emily was really helpful with.

Emily Foley and Edwin have been together for nine years, since she interned at Frog Holler in 2011. Before that she had gone to school at the U-M and, while in Ann Arbor, had volunteered and interned at the Community Farm, and also worked at Zingerman's, before beginning a job in the film industry. She was living in Brooklyn, New York and jokes that she liked the idea of moving to Brooklyn, Michigan. She now works largely from home but, as Head of Development for Hear/Say Productions, also frequently on location for about eight months at a time, helping to shepherd film projects from the idea stage to reality.

Emily Foley: When the pandemic hit, I was in Canada, scouting for an upcoming film that was supposed to hopefully go this past summer, filmed in Canada, which of course did not happen. So, we dropped everything, left early, and I came back here. A week later we had the farm's website up and all of the plants online and started selling shortly thereafter. I went from film production to farm pandemic response. For a fairly straightforward operation like this, there were still, what, a hundred varieties that we have. So, doing all that, going from a hundred percent face to face sales to a hundred percent online sales was a big transition right at the beginning of spring.

Continued on page 74

The King Family

Continued from page 73

Cathy King: We started with the seedlings because there was a pretty big demand for gardening and the Farmers Market was not open.

Emily Foley: It was actually kind of nice because we had about two weeks, we had a little bit of time before the plants were ready to go. It wasn't like other businesses where they had to be figuring it out on the fly, like grocery stores that stayed open through the pandemic and were also trying to figure it out. We did have a little buffer time to get organized.

Edwin King: Our day-to-day life changed much less than a lot of people's. Then, as the market opened back up, things gradually started to feel more normal, though with fewer faces.

Emily Foley: And less portions of faces, too. (Laughter)

Sandor Slomovits: Right, because of the masks.

Kenny King: When the pandemic hit, the farmers market shut down for a month or so, and we were about to start going to market with spring plant starts and we didn't exactly know what was going to happen. The market didn't really come back until pretty much after the plant season was through, so we really needed to adapt. And we did successfully have a plant season, everyone that wanted plants got them and we were able to sell most of the plants that we'd already planted, so it worked out, but it was a lot of adjusting. People could pick their orders up at the farm, or they could have those orders delivered.

Cathy King: We've continued that because it was very popular to have curbside pickup at the market. People who order from us online can just go to this curbside option at the farmers market and not have to park or anything, just pull in, get their order, and leave. That's continued to be a very useful option for a number of people. We're also doing some deliveries which, again, we were just meeting the need at the time when people were very uncertain if they wanted to go anywhere, if they should go anywhere, but they knew they needed food. We're continuing that on a smaller basis, because it's still helpful for a number of people.

> **When Covid happened, we saw how important it was for people to have access to locally grown food.**
>
> **—Cathy King**

Sandor Slomovits: Do you deliver mostly to people close by, or do you come to Ann Arbor?

Cathy King: They're pretty much all in Ann Arbor. We come to the market, then we go do deliveries. When Covid happened we saw how important it was for people to have access to locally grown food and the challenges of in-person sales, so we brought the CSA back and have more members than ever—over 100—who can pick up their box of produce without contact here at the farm, or at the market, or delivered to their door.

The delivery aspect was new due to Covid and we give Emily kudos for anticipating the need and setting up the online ordering site. In the early spring, when the farmers market and other garden centers were closed, we made hundreds of plant start deliveries to Ann Arbor households. On our first farm pickup day we had almost a hundred folks come out to the farm to get their seedlings—despite snow the day before. We transformed one of our hoop houses into a "Plantazon" fulfillment center and packed thousands of seedlings for delivery, farm pickup, and eventually curbside pickup at the Market. Everything was so uncertain, but we are grateful for the "pivots" we were able to make, for our customer's determination to get good food, and for Mother Nature who quietly went about her business of seasonal renewal and growth.

Sandor Slomovits: What about Holler Fest, how was it to have to cancel this year? Was it in some ways a relief?

Billy King: It was definitely kind of surreal. Around the time of the festival we just kept thinking about what we would normally be doing in early to mid-August, in terms of getting ready, and realizing that we didn't have to do any of that and trying to imagine how we did it before. Especially this year, with all of the demand, and the different avenues we've been maintaining with produce distribution, it's just felt like it would have been impossible.

Kenny King: When we realized that it wasn't going to be happening, everything just filled in the space that that would have taken. It happens at a time in the year when we don't have time for it in the first place. (Laughter) I don't know if we've really processed the fact that we didn't have Holler Fest. And though we didn't have a lot of anxiety about the decision because there was really no way to even consider it, I think we need to process it a bit more because we still don't know what the situation is going to be like next year.

Edwin King: I think we all missed it, but at the same time when you don't do something like that, you wonder how you ever had the time or the energy to do it because it felt like we were just as busy as we normally are without this massive undertaking.

Emily Foley: It also made me wonder how Edwin keeps the farm running in normal years because we were all so busy with farm stuff this year.

Cathy King: It was obviously the right decision. We were comfortable with making it, but I think we, and maybe people who are connected to Holler Fest, felt it that week. It felt like something was missing, there were so many kind comments on Facebook. It pulled at my heartstrings, but also, I felt physically not able to do anything like that,{we were] just doing all we could do growing food.

Continued on page 78

Cathy King, Cinder (dog), Emily Foley, and Kenny, Billy and Edwin King.

Edwin King

Emily Foley & Freya

Cathy King

Billy King

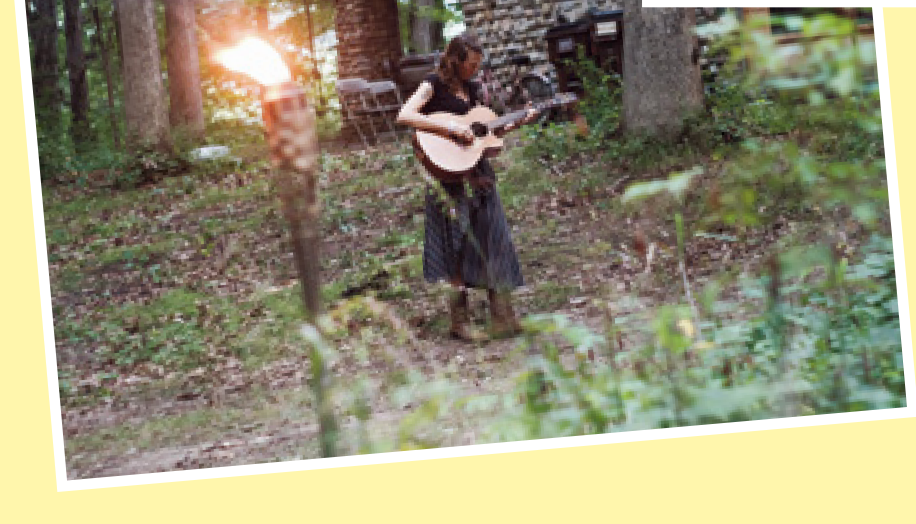
Kenny King

HOLLER FEST

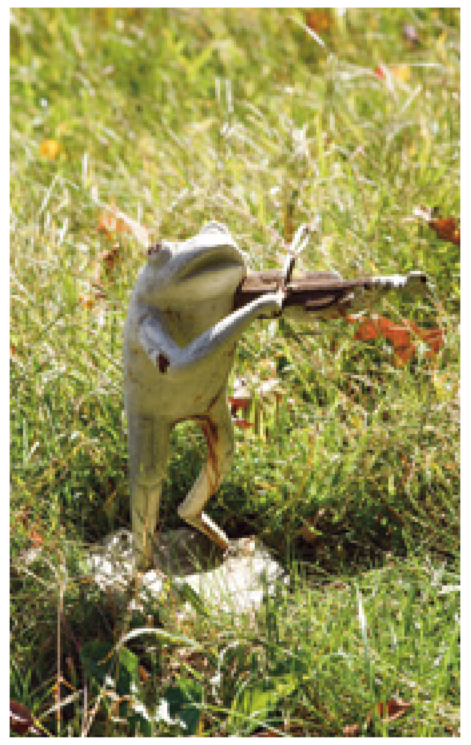
HOLLER FEST

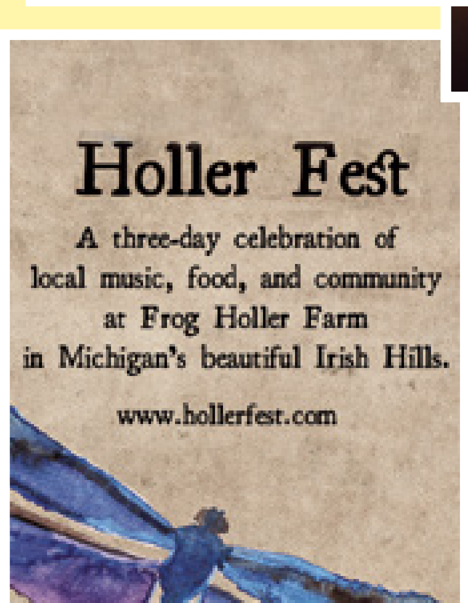
In the late 1980s, when Billy and Kenny began playing in public and recording, the King family started hosting occasional informal open mics on their front porch, and later in their barn.

Holler Fest primarily presents Michigan performers and has arguably the most beautiful natural setting and the best food of any music festival. For many in Southeast Michigan, musicians and music fans alike, it's become a cherished annual goodbye-to-summer tradition.



SECOND HOLLER





Holler Fest

A three-day celebration of
local music, food, and community
at Frog Holler Farm
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… All of the hundreds of Holler Fest volunteers—many who have now graduated to staff—and who come back every year to give up a lot of time being at the festival to instead be in the festival. There are too many to mention but believe me, we all know that we wouldn't be here today answering questions about how awesome we are if we didn't have hundreds and hundreds of folks supporting our crazy ideas.

— Cathy King

SECOND HOLLER

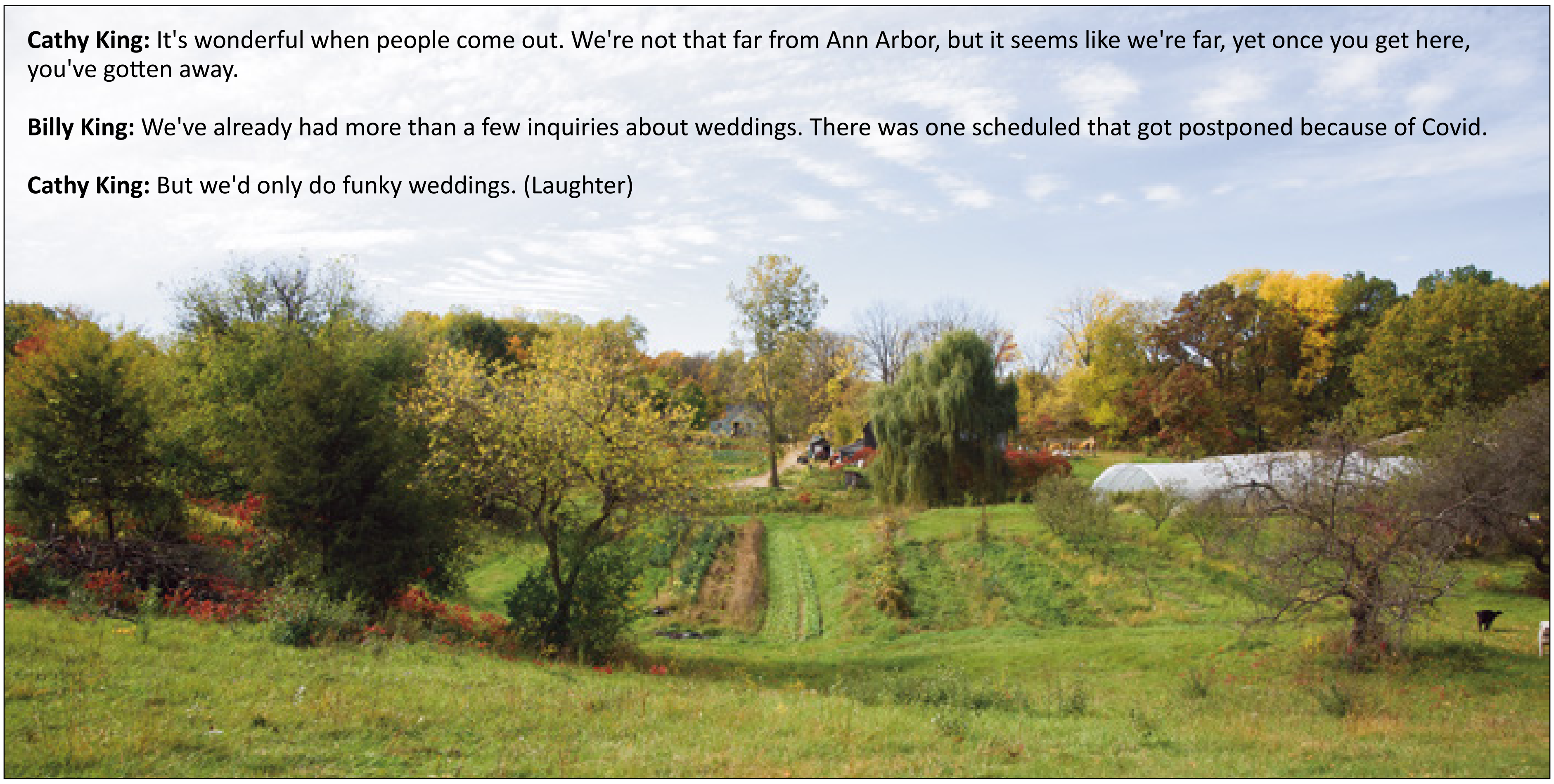
Mooselaw
Sorensen

The King Family

Cathy King: It's wonderful when people come out. We're not that far from Ann Arbor, but it seems like we're far, yet once you get here, you've gotten away.

Billy King: We've already had more than a few inquiries about weddings. There was one scheduled that got postponed because of Covid.

Cathy King: But we'd only do funky weddings. (Laughter)



Continued from page 74

Sandor Slomovits: Have you expanded the amount of food you're growing? Or is it that you're busier delivering the food?

Billy King: A little of both. I think we're growing about as much as we can with our limited growing area. Since we didn't do Holler Fest, we didn't have to reserve the field back there for parking. So, I was able to plant more later crops in that area. We tried to expand a little, due to the demand, but there's only so much we can do.

> **When I was playing with my brother at the age of 10, 11, 12, 13, the dream of making it big was always there. (Laughter) But then I started to see some of the downsides of that and became less fixated on that aspect of doing music.**
>
> **—Billy King**

Sandor Slomovits: How did all of you, Billy, Kenny, Edwin, and Emily decide that you were going to stay here and build your life around all this?

Billy King: I never went through too much thought or confusion about that. When I was younger, I was very fixated on the music and very much believing and imagining reaching some level of stardom. When I was playing with my brother at the age of 10, 11, 12, 13, the dream of making it big was always there. (Laughter) But then I started to see some of the downsides of that and became less fixated on that aspect of doing music. Once I stopped fixating on having music be... my life, I started feeling like I liked being on the farm where I had freedom to do music and also there was work readily available to me. I always felt like I had freedom, if I decided I wanted to do something different, I could.

Kenny King: I never really decided. I still haven't decided. My dad would have said the same thing. He'd say I haven't decided that thing. I don't know how long I'm going to do this. I have other things that I plan to do. I guess there's enough here to keep us going and keep it interesting. And, it feels valuable, I guess that would be the answer for why I've stayed here so long.

Going to college, I guess, I wanted to just see how I would do, see if I could do that. I felt like there was something that might be missing, so I went and tried to cover those bases, have that experience. And I did, and I had a graphic design job, a sort of corporate type environment. I felt like I got some of that experience and got the question answered as to whether I could do that, but I didn't continue. It didn't feel like that was it. I still wanted to keep farming and doing other things. I didn't want to just go into the corporate world and stay there forever.

I doubt I would have become a farmer if I had any other upbringing. But, as time goes by, I see myself as a steward of this land, this farm operation, and the festival where our community gathers. Capitalism doesn't guarantee the existence of small organic farms or small festivals, so I'm motivated by the belief that these things matter. At the very least they matter a lot to those that shop with us and come to the fest. Also, Frog Holler is more nature sanctuary than it is farmland—we farm just a few of our 120 acres, so an important reason to be here is to help keep it that way.

Edwin King: It didn't really feel like a decision so to speak. I think in a sense I'm still deciding. I've never had a moment like, okay, this is it for good, forever. I'm here. This has been good for now, and I don't need to look for anything else. I don't want to close the door, you know, don't want to be pigeon-holed in one profession or one interest.

Sandor Slomovits: Would you all talk a bit about the future.

Billy King: [The 2019] festival went really well. We were planning on building on that momentum and we had a great lineup [for 2020]. I've always been very humbled by the lineup that we were able to put together. But 2020 was expanding on that and bringing some new people in. We were excited about that. We also have this newly renovated barn, which is now a four-season space for whatever use we find for it; shows, movies, yoga, recording. We were excited about exploring that. And there's always the general challenge with the work of the farm and how we keep improving our techniques; that's always in the mix of our thinking.

Now [since the pandemic] I don't know. We're just waiting to see how this plays out. We're doing what we can on a very, very small scale in terms of maintaining those ideas.

> **When the pandemic hit, I was in Canada, scouting for an upcoming film… which of course did not happen. So, we dropped everything, left early, and I came back here. A week later we had the farm's website up and all of the plants online and started selling shortly thereafter. I went from film production to farm pandemic response. For a fairly, straightforward operation like this, there were still, what, a hundred varieties that we have.**
>
> **—Emily Foley**

Cathy King: I think Billy said that really well. Holler Fest, it's kind of hard to describe the breadth of it, the number of people that we've somehow drawn into the circle and have bonded through creating that together. So, we were looking to continue developing that in service to the community. To me, it's beyond our decision anymore—except for now, of course—it is a service we provide.

I think that the land is sort of a landscape for us. This is something that I think Ken wanted to do. He didn't have time to do everything he wanted to do. We're really just in service to the land and to the beauty here. That's what we talk about, how we can make it more functional. I have an interest in flowers and beautifying that way—not that it needs anything extra. The palette of the land is an ongoing, infinite practice.

Billy King: We're trying to work with it as much as we can because it's not really farmland, it's rolling hills and woods. I know in the early days when (he addresses Cathy) you had somebody come and consult about buying the land and said, 'What's the best use for this land' and they said 'recreation,' basically golf course or something. (Laughter)

Continued on page 80

These days things are more uncertain than ever, but I feel like there's always some degree of that, so I try not to plan on anything too definite. That being said, things haven't changed very much for the past 15, 20 years, so maybe I should learn from the past and assume that the same will be true in the future.

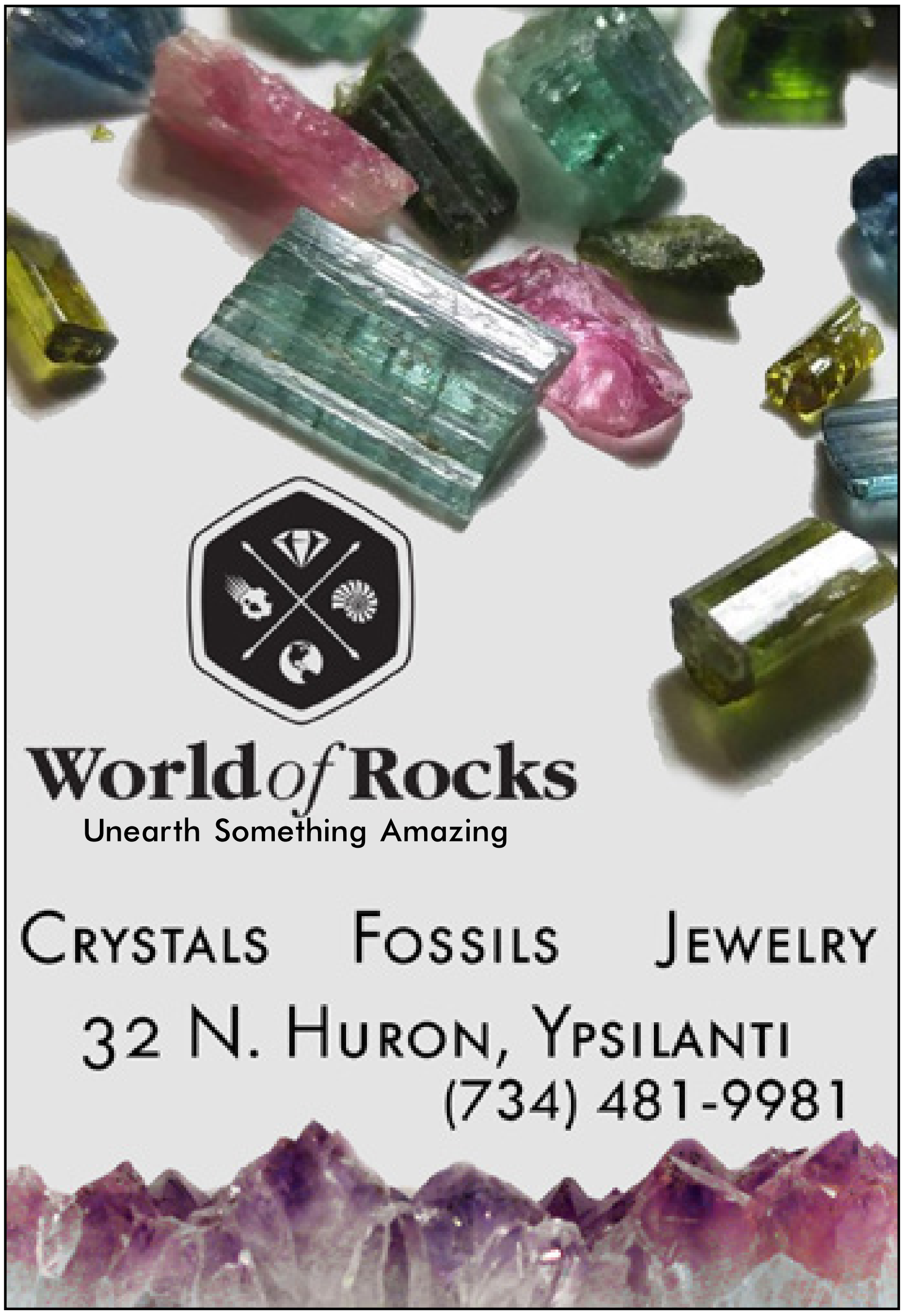
—Edwin King

The Two Frog Hollers

Cathy King writes: We added the "Farm" to Frog Holler because of confusion with the produce wholesalers in Ann Arbor also named Frog Holler. Rick Peshkin was part of the early group that owned and ran Indian Summer and also bought the Frog Holler land. Rick's affinity turned out to be wholesaling and distributing and he bought produce, cheese, and nuts from Eastern Market and the Detroit Terminal for a lot of the early alternative restaurants: Eden Deli, Seva, the Del Rio, Indian Summer. He got busy with this and called his operation Frog Holler to differentiate from Indian Summer and because the group had started an entity called Frog Holler Ltd. to purchase the farm. When Rick got so busy that he completely separated from the Indian Summer group, his business was already well-established under the Frog Holler name. So, he wanted to keep it. I suppose we could have challenged it, but we weren't inclined along those lines. We have stayed on good terms. Rick has been retired for some time and sold Frog Holler Produce to a wholesaler based in Grand Rapids.

What has bothered us a bit is that folks think we have a big trucking operation in addition to our farm stall. The Frog Holler Produce trucks are very visible around Ann Arbor so it's understandable. Somebody said to me recently, 'I get so happy when I see one of those Frog Holler trucks go by, because then I think about you guys on the farm'. And I feel bad because I have to say, 'Well, actually…'.

We added the disclaimer [explaining this history] on the home page of our web site and on Facebook when, at the start of the lockdown, Frog Holler Produce started offering "CSA" boxes—then it got really confusing. "We have no bad relations with them at all," says Billy. "It's just, you know, what do you do? We've thought about slightly altering our name, but that would just be confusing to people too, like, 'Where did Frog Holler go?'"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The King Family

Continued from page 79

> **As time goes by, I see myself as a steward of this land, this farm operation, and the festival where our community gathers. Capitalism doesn't guarantee the existence of small organic farms or small festivals, so I'm motivated by the belief that these things matter.**
>
> **—Kenny King**

Cathy King: I've been thinking about that. We are also offering recreation.

Sandor Slomovits: Yeah! You sure are.

Billy King: They were thinking campground, and now we have a once a year campground, and that's something that we might be able, as the infrastructure is in place more and more, to rent it out, or have other events that we don't have to be involved in necessarily.

Cathy King: It's wonderful when people come out. We're not that far from Ann Arbor, but it seems like we're far, yet once you get here, you've gotten away.

Billy King: We've already had more than a few inquiries about weddings. There was one scheduled that got postponed because of Covid.

Cathy King: But we'd only do funky weddings. (Laughter)

Billy King: Right. It's gotta be funky.

Edwin King: I feel like I very rarely think that far into the future. Every year is exhausting but rewarding in its own way. Then you have a moment when you're like, well, I really want to take some time off. Then by the next spring, you're like, well, let's try it again. These days things are more uncertain than ever, but I feel like there's always some degree of that, so I try not to plan on anything too definite. That being said, things haven't changed very much for the past 15, 20 years, so maybe I should learn from the past and assume that the same will be true in the future.

Emily Foley: I call the farm home now and it's always really nice coming back here, having stability, a piece of land that I love so much, having that as a place that I can return to, also going out on these adventures [for my other work] and be able to take more risks. It is a very speculative business (the film industry), in the sense that, especially with the development work that I do, you put in a lot of time and energy into projects that may or may not ever happen. I feel very grateful to have this grounding presence in my life. Not all of it is in my control obviously, but I do hope that both these parts of my life continue to develop and evolve. I feel so very grateful to have found some semblance of balance between my professional life and my home life.

***

As I was finishing this article Cathy sent me an email in which she wanted to be sure we gave her family an opportunity to acknowledge all the help and support they have received over the years, "Some sort of shoutout to the myriad folks who have helped to establish the King family brand!" she wrote (adding a smiley face :-). Then she continued, "I thought about this when I was picking beans (my meditation zendo :-). And she went on:

> **[Just] as we did with our homeschooling approach, we provide a beautiful (and hopefully inspiring) setting, provide support and resources where we can, and stand back and let the creative juices flow!**
>
> **—Cathy King**

Cathy King: From quizzical parents who scratched their heads but still loaned us some money in those early days of living like pioneers in the stone cabin, to the many young people over the years who have given us their energy and muscle on the farm, to the extremely loyal customers who keep coming to the market, many have become friends as well as customers, to our neighbors, the Coynes, who 'got' what we were doing right away and gave us positive support and money, and Tom Hines next door, who builds the bonfires at Holler Fest but also, as a retired construction contractor, was (and still is) our partner in crime building much of the Holler Fest infrastructure and road management, to Tom Huber, another builder responsible for some big projects (the kitchen!) and some invisible (who, along with Tom Hines helped us move from electrical cords laying all over the ground to buried wires), all of the hundreds of Holler Fest volunteers—many who have now graduated to staff—and who come back every year to give up a lot of time being at the festival to instead be in the festival. There are too many to mention but believe me, we all know that we wouldn't be here today answering questions about how awesome we are if we didn't have hundreds and hundreds of folks supporting our crazy ideas.

I do hope that the farm and festival can continue to be a crucible for folks to find their creative path. We see it happening with former interns who now have their own farms, and Holler Fest staff who have grown in the skills and interests they bring. We don't 'train', we don't really 'instruct'. [Just] as we did with our homeschooling approach, we provide a beautiful (and hopefully inspiring) setting, provide support and resources where we can, and stand back and let the creative juices flow!

###

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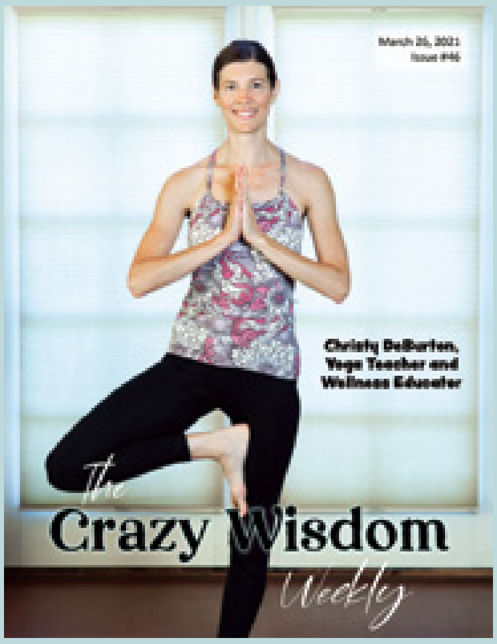
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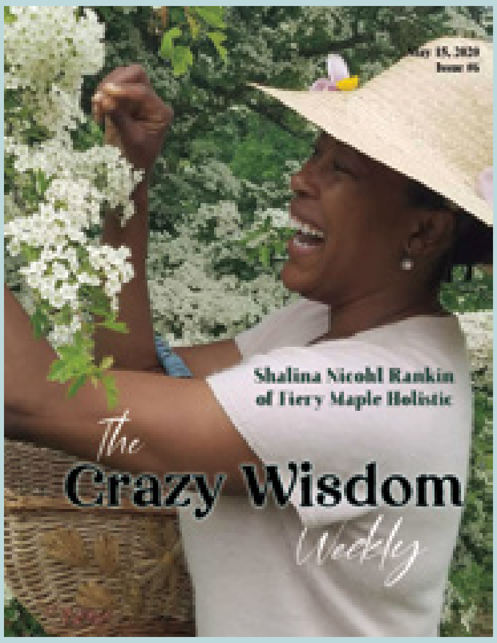
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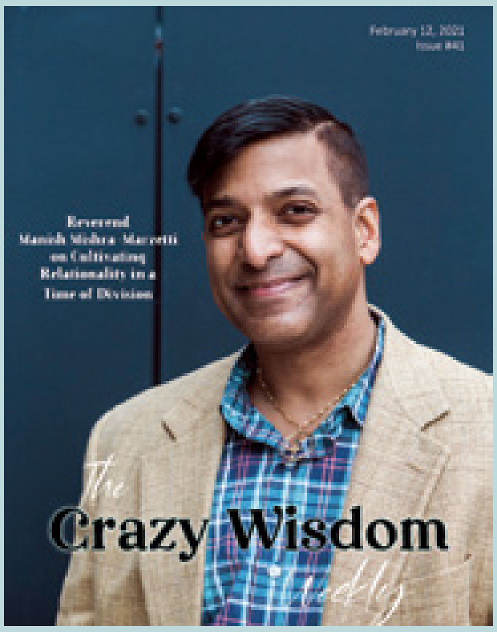
February 12, 2021
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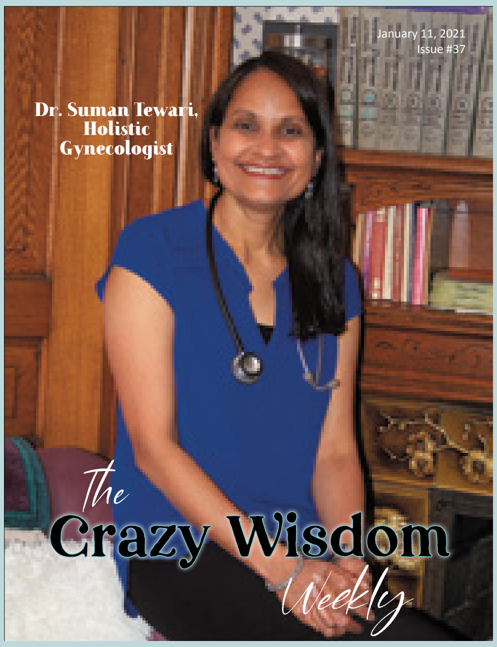
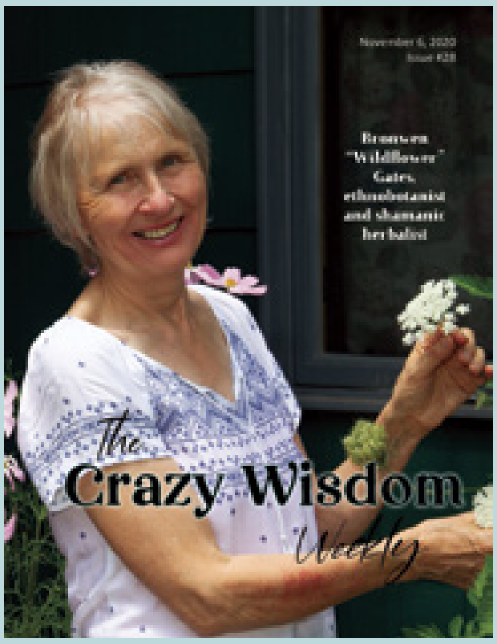
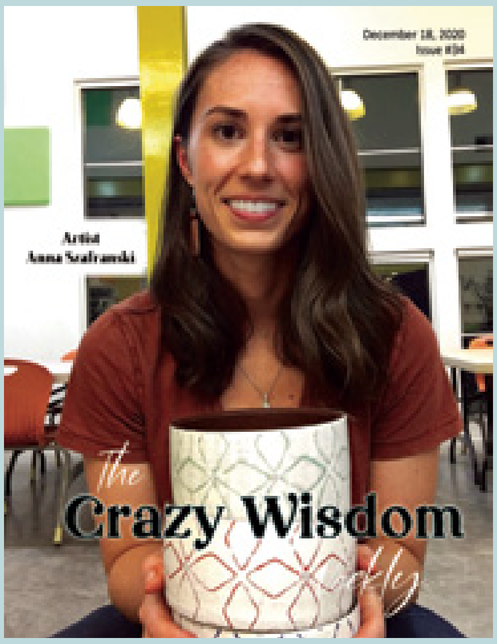
Crazy Wisdom
Weekly


January 11, 2021
Issue #37
Dr. Suman Tewari,
Holistic
Gynecologist
The
Crazy Wisdom
Weekly


November 6, 2020
Issue #28
Bronwen
"Wildflower"
Gates,
ethnobotanist
and shamanic
herbalist
The
Crazy Wisdom
Weekly


December 18, 2020
Issue #34
Artist
Anna Szafranski
The
Crazy Wisdom
Weekly

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

A Free Guide to Local Classes, Workshops, and Events
May through August 2021

Calendar Edited by Michelle McLemore

Animals and Pets

Basic Animal Communication with Judy Liu Ramsey• Saturday, June 19 - Sunday, June 20 • 9:00 a.m. • Rediscover your natural telepathic communication skills with step-by-step instruction. In a supportive class environment, learn how to connect with animals the way they communicate with each other. It's a fun, creative, and fascinating window to the world around us! Class will be online via Zoom format. Required reading: *Animal Talk* by Penelope Smith. $150/$75 for repeating students. Contact Judy Ramsey via email at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com or https://JudyRamsey.net.

Aromatherapy and Essential Oils

Essential Oils Made Easy with Julie Sottek • Wednesdays, beginning May 5 • 6:30 p.m. • Learn empowering, natural solutions to health and wellness for the whole family in a live 30-minute Zoom class. Learn the must-have top 15 essential oils that handle 85% of your health concerns for a vibrant life! We will cover what essential oils are, where they come from, and how to ensure a certified pure tested grade. Learn 3 basic application methods. This class is for the new and experienced oil users. Request your complimentary oil sample to try before class. Register at dragonflydeo.com (Schedule Services, Essential Oils) for the class link. Free. Contact Julie Sottek at dragonflydeo@gmail.com or dragonflydeo.com.

Aromatherapy and Essential Oils—Creating Personalized Bath Collection with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., and Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sunday, August 22 • 2:00 p.m. • Choose from a massive collection of essential oils to create your own personalized bath collection to take home, to awaken, to believe in yourself; to help move you closer toward your life's purpose for purity, for clarity, to envision, for inspiration, to surrender, for acceptance, for hope, for joy, for gratitude, for humility, for courage, for love, for clearing, for energy, for creativity, and for abundance. Special $75 + $50 Materials Fee (Normal Class Rate = $125 + $50 Materials Fee). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511; krngrnbg@gmail.com or clair-ascension.com.

Art and Craft

Summer Art Class—Just for Fun (4-week course via Zoom) with Sharon Foley Bock • June 3, 10, 17, 24 • 1:30 p.m. • Join fellow art Zoomers in this series designed to help you explore, create, and enjoy methods for fashioning whimsical pieces of 2-dimensional art. Experience not required. YOUR talent is a given. Materials are easily obtained wherever you are, and prompts and techniques will be provided each week. Each two-hour session will lead you through activities that will boost your creative energies while reviewing foundational practices that underlie successful art endeavors. The course is 4 weeks; 2 hours per session. Cost $50. Contact the Weber Center at webercenter@adriandominicans.org or 517-266-4000.

Bodywork and Body Mind Therapies

D.O.V.E. : DIVINE ORIGINAL VIBRATION EMBODIMENT System Practitioner Training (Clair-Ascension Kabbalistic Balance) with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T. & Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • May 7, 14, 21, June 4, 11, 18, July 9, 16, 23, or August 6, 13, 20 • 10:30 a.m. • Study the D.O.V.E. system manual to identify and repattern a client's limiting beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and patterns; assist clients in expressing any commensurate low-vibrational emotions, and instituting new behaviors, through the Tree of Life; learn to Kabbalistically balance a client's energy via art, movement, music, toning, sound, aromatherapy, gemstones, sacred symbols, connecting with G-D, Archangels, Angels, Masters of Light, trees, powerful Archetypes, and more. $777 (for any group of THREE dates above) + materials fee. Contact Karen Greenberg via 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Bowenwork4kids with Lisa M. Teets • Monthly, Third Sundays: May 16, June 20, July 18, and August 15 • 3:00 p.m. • Bowenworks4Kids is an opportunity for children to receive high quality soft tissue Bowenwork therapy. It can provide permanent healing and relief of pain from a multitude of acute and chronic conditions. The work frequently results in a deep sense of overall relaxation and facilitates the recharging and balancing of the body. Young people respond well to this work. First session free for kids under 17. Contact Lisa at Bowenfix.com. Contact Lisamteets@gmail.com.

Book Discussion Groups

Jewel Heart Readers with Jewel Heart Instructors • Monthly, second Mondays: May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9 • 7-8:30 p.m. • Enjoy lively discussion on monthly Buddhist-related book selections with our community. All are welcome. Free, but donations welcome. Contact Jewel Heart at programs@jewelheart.org or 734-994-3387 for this month's book selection and participation information. Visit the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.

Buddhism

Precious Human Life - Rare and Hard to Get (Applied Meditation Technology series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, May 1 • 9:00 a.m. • Taking our life for granted, we waste precious time. This workshop focuses on appreciating the opportunities of a spiritual life and making life meaningful. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. For more information, call Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org.

Jewel Heart Sunday Talks: Ancient Wisdom. Modern Times with Demo Rinpoche or Gelek Rimpoche • Weekly on Sundays from May 2 to August 29 • 11:00 a.m. • We invite you to enjoy one-hour Sunday morning talks with live presentations by Demo Rinpoche and video recordings by Gelek Rimpoche. Stay tuned for the moderated discussion after the talk. Free, yet donations welcome. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org. To register, click on the link accompanying this program's listing at jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs. For more information, visit the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org.

Live Stream Sunday Service with Haju Sunim, Maum, and Hayeon • Every Sunday, beginning May 2 • 10:00 a.m. • Join us every Sunday for meditation and a dharma talk at https://bit.ly/a2zenyoutube. By donation. Contact the Ann Arbor Zen Temple for more information at 734-761-6520 or visit zenbuddhisttemple.org/annarbor.

Zen meditation and service; Informal conversations on the Dharma with Marta Dabis • First and Third Sundays: May 2, May 16, June 6, June 20, July 4, July 18, August 1, Aug 15 • 11:00 a.m. meditation; 11:40 a.m. service • Traditional Japanese Zen Buddhist meditation in the lineage of Shrunyu Suzuki, followed by Buddhist chanting in English and Japanese, and an informal conversation about Buddhism. Donations only. Contact Marta Dabis at 248-202-3102 or JissoJiZen@gmail.com; JissoJiZen.org.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 96.

Artwork by Jennifer Carson

Picks for Ewe and Me: Our Calendar Editor's picks of interesting happenings in our community

- **Basic Animal Communication (via Zoom) with Judy Liu Ramsey** • Saturday, June 19 - Sunday, June 20 • 9:00 a.m. * See Animals and Pets.
- **Three Approaches to Profound Reality with Professor Guy Newland** • Every Wednesday in June: June 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. • 7:00 p.m. • * See Buddhism.
- **Ryaku Fusatsu - Full Moon - Vow Renewal - Ceremony with Marta Dabis** • Fourth Sundays of each month: May 23, June 27, July 25, August 22 • 11:00 a.m. * See Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals.
- **End-of-Life Doula Training with Patty Brennan** • May 22, May 23 and July 17, July 18 • 9:30 a.m. * See Death and Dying.
- **Sufi Chanting, Movement and Meditations (via Zoom) with Imam Kamau Ayubbi** • Every Tuesday, May - August • 6:30 p.m. * See Energy and Healing.
- **A Life of Mythic Proportions with Mara Evenstar** • Fridays, May 7, 14, & 21• 7:00 p.m. * See Personal Growth.
- **The Nameless Art: A Year and a Day, Course in Primal Celtic Shamanism (PERSONAL Practice Path) Rocky Rains** • Multiple dates & times. * See Shamanism.
- **Complex Character Building in Multiple Timelines with Lexi Mohney and Eric Lockwood** • Wednesday, June 16 • 6:00 p.m. * See Writing and Poetry.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Buddhism , cont.

Clockwork Science: Kalachakra Vision for Awakening Humanity, Society, and the Planet with Joseph Loizzo, MD, PhD • Wednesday, May 5, 12, 19 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 22 • 10 - 5 p.m. • This course explores the radically positive vision of our human future offered by the great Unexcelled Yoga Tantra system of Kalachakra, the Wheel of Time (or the Clockwork Process). It compares the ancient tradition of meditation with modern scientific discoveries aimed to expand the participants' spiritual practice in light of the Kalachakra's vision of how personal transformation naturally accelerates positive interpersonal, social and planetary evolution. $135 Jewel Heart Members or Nalanda / $160 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org.

Garden Your Heart with Demo Rinpoche • Saturday, May 15 • 9:00 a.m. • Cultivate the garden of your mind, weed out negative emotions, and sow the seeds of enlightenment. Demo Rinpoche will draw on the vast teachings found in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition to celebrate the awakening mind of spring. $40 to $60 Sliding Scale. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org.

Buddha's Birthday with Haju Sunim • Sunday, May 16 • 10:00 a.m. • Traditional Buddha's Birthday Service with Special Chanting, Bathing of the Baby Buddha. By donation. For more information phone 734-761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.com.

Vesak Day: How Buddha Defeated a Swarm of Demons with Demo Rinpoche • Wednesday, May 26 • 7:00 p.m. • Demo Rinpoche gives a free public talk in honor of Vesak Day, an annual celebration of the birth, death, and parinirvana of Buddha Shakyamuni. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org.

Three Approaches to Profound Reality with Professor Guy Newland • Every Wednesday in June: June 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30. • 7:00 p.m. • When Buddha meditated on the causes of human suffering and dissatisfaction, he found liberation, which he described as realizing Profound Reality. Professor Newland will contrast three different approaches to getting to Profound Reality by three eminent Tibetan masters: Dolpopa Sherap Gyaltsen, Jamgön Lama Tsongkhapa, and Goram Sönam Senge (more familiarly known as Gorampa). $100 Jewel Heart Members / $125 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or email programs@jewelheart.org.

Impermanence—Death and Dying (Applied Meditation Technology series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, June 5 • 9:00 a.m. • Wonderful is life, short its nature (Je Tsongkhapa, 3 Principles). Why dwell on the end of life? We don't know what's on the other side, and if we can prepare, now is the time. By realizing the fragility and beauty of our life, we take more care to appreciate it and make the time we have left count. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or email programs@jewelheart.org.

Karma—Opportunities and Challenges (Applied Meditation Technology series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • July 10 • 9:00 a.m. • What causes the events in our lives to happen? Is it chance or the actions of a higher power—or just cause and effect? This workshop explores the reality of actions and their consequences through guided meditations, individual meditation, and discussion. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or email programs@jewelheart.org.

Artwork byAni Daher

The Truth of Suffering (Applied Meditation Technology series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, August 7 • 9:00 a.m. • There are many obvious reasons for the various kinds of human misery,but underlying all of them are our own individual and collective actions, perceptions, and emotional reactions. Exploring these leads to a re-appraisal of our choices and a path to lasting happiness. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or email programs@jewelheart.org.

Everyday Compassion with Susan Billmaier and Special Guest Brad Vanlandingham. (Karma Jinpa Tarchen) • June 6, 13 • 10:00 a.m. • Compassion literally means to suffer together. It is a concern for the well-being of others; it is our capacity to be open to the reality of suffering and to aspire to its healing. Compassion is similar to other types of emotional understanding such as empathy (a vicarious experience of another person's emotion); altruism (a principle of devotion to the welfare of others); and benevolence (a desire to do good or promote the happiness of others through kindness and generosity). This class teaches tools to increase capacity for compassion by making it tangible and concrete within everyday situations and relationships. This skill increases personal emotional resiliency and fortitude, which can then be used to increase the quality of compassion in relationship with other people. $54. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071 or evenstar.institute@gmail.com. Visit evenstarschalice.com/courses.html for more information.

> The beautiful spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also.
>
> —Harriet Ann Jacobs

Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals

Ryaku Fusatsu - Full Moon - Vow Renewal - Ceremony with Marta Dabis • Fourth Sunday of each month May 23 - August 22 • 11:00 a.m. • After 40 minutes of Zen meditation, a traditional Japanese Full Moon (vow renewal) ceremony will be held in English. Donations only. Contact Marta Dabis at 248-202-3102 or email JissoJiZen@gmail.com; JissoJiZen.org.

Summer Solstice and Blessing of the Labyrinth with Esther Kennedy, OP • Sunday, June 20 • 3:30 a.m. • Those of us in the Northern hemisphere of our beautiful planet gather to remember our connection to the Sun, source of our light. We celebrate the fullness of life growing in the fields around us. In gratitude for all, we light the Solstice Fire. As it burns, we honor the spiritual fire within each of us. Free and open to all. Contact the Weber Center at 517-266-4000 or visit webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Chanting: Awaken Your Inner Goddess: Divine Mother Mantras and Chants with Susan Billmaier • Sunday, May 16, 23 • 10:00 a.m. • Do you want to strengthen your home life? There's a Divine Mother mantra for that. Do you want to protect yourself and your family? There's a Divine Mother mantra for that. Do you want prosperity? There's a Divine Mother mantra for that. Do you want to give and receive comfort and compassion? There's a Divine Mother mantra for that. Do you simply want to connect more consistently with your Divine Feminine? There's a Divine Mother mantra for that. You'll learn all these and more! Note: The Inner Goddess and the qualities she imbues, are available to anyone regardless of any identity you hold about yourself. $54. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071 or evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.html.

Children and Young Adults

H2W2 - K4K - Happy, Healthy, Wealthy, Wise - Kabbalah for Kids (5th grade & up) with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., and Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sunday, May 16, June 13, July 11, August 15 • 1:00 p.m. • Utilizing movement, multi-sensory input, color, and experiential learning, we build self-esteem of spiritually evolved children (rather than reinforcing feelings of being different, damaged, defective, disordered, or dysfunctional). In an ascensional journey through the Tree of Life, we aid in organizational skills, navigating low-vibrational emotions, relationships, setting healthy boundaries. We encourage children in discovering and fostering their authentic selves and genius, to fulfill their spiritual mission of a healthy, interdependent, functional planet for the prophecy of 1000 Years of Peace. $50 for a 2-hour class; meets one time/month for about a year. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Death and Dying

Death Cafe with Rev. Annie Kopko via Zoom• Monthly on First Tuesdays, May 4 - August 3 • 6:30 p.m. • Discussion of Death and Dying. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270 or interfaithspirit.org.

End-of-Life Doula Training with Patty Brennan • May 22, 23 or July 17, 18 • 9:30 a.m. • End-of-life doulas are the new frontier in end-of-life care. Their emergence is an outgrowth of recent cultural trends favoring more natural and holistic approaches for an aging generation of baby boomers. Our End-of-Life Doula Training covers how to provide non-medical comfort and support to the dying person and their loved ones in the final days, weeks, and months of life. $697. Contact Patty at 734-663-1523 or patty@lifespandoulas.com; LifespanDoulas.com.

Care-Giver Guidance: Assisting & Honoring the Transition (via video conferencing) with Michelle McLemore, CHTP, Rev. • Monthly on Second Monday: June 14 - August 9. • 30-minute sessions; Time TBD based on group needs. • Care giving is immeasurably important and an honor. Yet, it can be both physically and emotionally challenging. How to respectfully handle declines in your charge's physical and mental abilities? How to understand and support when the veil between here and there becomes thinner? To honor your time, join us for just 30 minutes a month for ideas, a chance to ask questions, share situations, and be supported as you do this physical and spiritual work. Sessions are free, though donations are appreciated. Contact Michelle at 517-270-0986 or energy@michellemclemore.com; facebook.com/MichelleMcLemoreHealingGuide.

Dreamwork

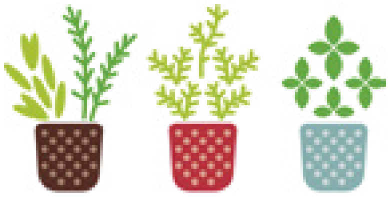
Personalized Dream Analysis with Michelle McLemore, CHTP, Rev. • Thursday, May 13 • 6:30 p.m. • Learn common dream archetypes, dream theories, and analysis steps to improve sleep as well as address subconscious and conscious concerns. Explore the messages within your dreams and learn how to address repetitive dreams and/or nightmares. 1.5 hour with time for discussion. $50. TBD if on-site or via video conferencing. Contact Michelle at 517-270-0986 or energy@michellemclemore.com; facebook.com/MichelleMcLemoreHealingGuide.

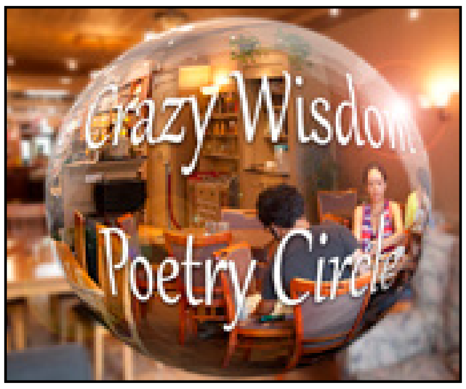
Dream Encounters (When it's not "just a dream.") with Michelle McLemore, CHTP, Rev. • Sunday, August 8 • 2 p.m. • Discuss spiritual and other encounters that can occur during sleep. Examine your dream "tells" that reveal you are not just dreaming. Techniques for staying within the encounter as well as to disengage and wake as needed will be offered. 1.5 hour with time for discussion. $50. TBD if on-site or via video conferencing. Contact Michelle at 517-270-0986 or energy@michellemclemore.com; facebook.com/MichelleMcLemoreHealingGuide.

Energy and Healing

Heightening Your Vibration: Alchemy with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T. and Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sundays, May 2, 23 • 1:30 p.m. • Some people have become depressed with the Covid-19 isolation. Learn a myriad of tools and techniques, to change your vibration from a lower to a higher vibration, and to sustain it -- including, but not limited to, sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, sacred oils, affirmations, visualization, meditation, prayers that you compose, gratitude, breathing, drumming, movement, music, Holy Geometry, traditions, toning, Names of G-D, Archangels, Masters of Light. $110. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Healer & Ascension Certification Course with Rev. Eve Wilson, Director of The Healer Development Program. • Every other Thursday for 14 months beginning May 20 • 7-10 p.m. • Learn healing and ascension work for people, pets, and the planet. Physical, emotional, mental, spiritual healing, rewrite soul contracts, heal past lives, resolve traumas, empower, strengthen unity with Higher Self and wholeness. Grads eligible for Legal UCM Healer Practitioner Certification throughout the USA and soon in Canada. $3200. Contact Eve Wilson at 248-854-6873 or evew@spiritualhealers.com; spiritualhealers.com.





Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series

hosted by
Edward Morin, David Jibson,
and Lissa Perrin

Second and Fourth Wednesday
of each month, 7-9 p.m.

Until further notice, all sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom.

Email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com for Zoom link

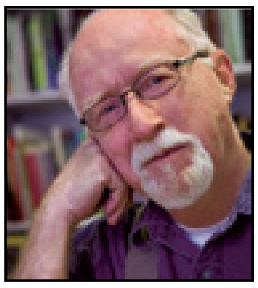
Second Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.: Poetry Workshop. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m.

Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.: Featured Reader(s) for 50 minutes. Open Mic reading for up to 1 hour. All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry.

Featured readers

May 26 - Carolyne Wright, a Seattle native, authored ten books of poetry and translated five volumes of poetry translations from Spanish and Bengali. The title poem of *This Dream the World: New & Selected Poems* received a Pushcart Prize and was included in *The Best American Poetry 2009*. She co-edited the anthology, *Raising Lilly Ledbetter: Women Poets Occupy the Workspace*.

June 23 - Kelly Fordon, award-winning writer and teacher from the Detroit metro area, explores personal and class conflicts in city and suburb. Her two recent story collections from Wayne State University Press are *I Have the Answer* and *Garden for the Blind*. Her poetry includes one book, *Goodbye Toothless House*, and three chapbooks. www.kellyfordon.com



July 28 - William Trowbridge's eighth poetry book is *Oldguy: Superhero—The Complete Collection*, Red Hen Press, 2019. His ninth, *Call Me Fool*, is forthcoming from Red Hen in 2022. He is a poetry mentor in the University of Nebraska Omaha Low-residency MFA in Writing Program and was Poet Laureate of Missouri from 2012 to 2016.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle

The Poetry Series is open to all.
There is never a charge.
https://cwcircle.poetry.blog/

A FRIENDSHIP STORY
HEART & MIND

Nishi Singhal is an intuition coach, a public health expert, and certified yoga teacher. Inspired by her work with children through teaching yoga, Nishi wrote A Friendship Story: Heart & Mind to introduce the lesson of presence so that anyone (big or small) can live a more balanced and joyful life. She also created Joy Parade, an online space dedicated to teaching individuals how to access their intuition and apply it to their day-to-day living. Visit JoyParade.co to learn more.

Energy and Healing, cont.

Healing & Ascension Monthly Series with Rev. Eve Wilson, Director of The Healer Development Program. • Series of 6 classes: meeting Thursdays, every 4 weeks. To begin May 27 • 7:30 p.m. • Merge with Higher Self and learn to live increasingly in the new world of unity and unconditional love. Master the challenges of this time of transition. Beautiful healing & ascension meditations and teaching designed for those participating every month. Recordings that can be used again and again to help you stay tuned up, whole, and to grow into your truth. $50 per meeting or $300 for the series. Contact Eve Wilson at 248-854-6873 or evew@spiritualhealers.com; spiritualhealers.com.

Intro. to Energy Sensing and Healing with Michelle McLemore, CHTP, Rev • Saturday, June 12 • 1:00 p.m. • What unites all energy modalities and theories? Learn the Earth's and basic human energy anatomy systems. Discover how energy and higher sense perception (aka E.S.P.) relate. Rediscover peace in grounding exercises and joy in sensing and interpreting energy patterns. Practice energy-scanning and healing techniques on-site. Book with a partner or make a new friend in class. 2.5 hour class. $75. ($10 for prior students wanting refresher.) Class size is limited. You may choose to wear a mask, but it will not be required per individual's health needs. You will, at times, be completing exercises within a 6-foot distance of others; during general instruction, chairs will be spaced accordingly to most recent CDC/Health Dept. education recommendations. Contact Michelle at 517-270-0986 or energy@michellemclemore.com; facebook.com/MichelleMcLemoreHealingGuide.

Exercise and Fitness

Exercise and Fitness Virtual TRX Suspension Class with Gwyn Jones • May through September • Wednesdays and Fridays 8:15 - 8:45 a.m. • TRX is suspension training workout that will give total-body health benefits for everyone. Gravity is your resistance here, so adjusting and modifying your moves gives you the advantage to choose the level of difficulty you want. Modifications are given for every move, so you always keep building workouts. TRX will challenge your strength, core, and cardio individually or all at once. Students will need their own straps. $10. Contact Gwyn by filling out an online form at gwynjonespilates.com.

Imagine Fitness & Yoga • May 1 • See website for hours • At Imagine Fitness & Yoga, you can expect first-class, personalized treatment with dedication to a non-competitive, friendly environment. We offer classes in small groups and online, heated floors in our yoga studio, and Precor fitness equipment. Membership includes unlimited classes and open gym access 7 days a week! First month membership for Only $50! This offer is available to any new member at any time of the month. Contact Jackie Farah at 734-622-8119 or imagine@imaginefitnessandyoga.com; imaginefinessandyoga.com.

> Deep in their roots,
> all flowers keep the light.
>
> —Theodore Roethke

Virtual Pilates Classes with Gwyn Jones • May-Sept. • Reoccurring, Monday-Friday • 9:30-10 a.m. • Shoulder Mondays Pilates, Hippy Tuesday Pilates, Core Wednesday Pilates, Kitchen Thursday Pilates, All Around Friday Pilates. $5 per class. Contact Gwyn by filling out an online form at gwynjonespilates.com.

Moving Meditations: Spiritual Forms for Physical Health with Michelle McLemore, CHTP, Rev. • Saturday, July 10 • 11:00 a.m. • Religions across the world share many of the same moving prayer forms. Research shows the combination of focused thought along with movement increases energy intake & energy flow, raises vibration, and helps the overall physical health. Explore poses that overlap between yoga, Christianity, Islam, and other spiritual, intentional forms. Learn a short moving meditation that combines the health-improving, most utilized poses world-wide, yet is not linked to one set religion or dogma. 1 hour workshop. Participants should bring their own towel or yoga mat. $40. Contact Michelle McLemore at 517-270-0986 to register or visit energy@michellemclemore.com; facebook.com/MichelleMcLemoreHealingGuide.

Festivals and Fairs

Detroit Conjure & Folk Magic Festival • Aug 14 • 10:00 a.m. • This festival brings people together to learn about various alternative spirituality, folk magical practices, folk traditions, and magic. We chose Proud Lake Recreation Area for its proximity to nature and peace. You can find out more about us at our Facebook Page known as Detroit Conjure LLC. It is a free event. Contact Kenya Coviak at detroitconjure@gmail.com; detroitconjurefestival.webs.com.

Great Lakes Herb Faire with Tieraona Low Dog; other speakers include Jim McDonald, David Windston, Ellen Kamhi, Talal Al Hamad, Mimi Hernandez, Diana Quinn, Sajah Popham and Lottie Spady. • Sept. 10-12 • Annually, weekend after Labor Day • 4:30 p.m. • 7th annual Great Lakes Herb Faire! This year we will once again gather virtually in celebration of the sharing of herbal knowledge. Join us for a fantastic lineup of herbalists. $100-$150. Contact anna.motherbloom@gmail.com or info@greatlakesherbfaire.org; greatlakesherbfaire.org.

Intuitive and Psychic Development

Teleconference: Focused Mind Meditation with John Friedlander • 9 a.m. • Monthly, first Sundays May - August• The development of sustained focused meditation makes it easy to develop a whole new magnitude of psychic skill and healing ability; as well as a whole new level of mental clarity and spiritual openness. $15. Contact Violeta Viviano at 734-476-1513; www.psychicpsychology.com.

Teleconference: Women's Group with John Friedlander and Gloria Hemsher • 7 p.m. • May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3 • Meditations concentrating on women's issues relative to biological energies as well as that of the aura. $12.50. Contact Violeta Viviano at 734-476-1513; www.psychicpsychology.com.

Summer Intensive with John Friedlander • July 14 • 7 p.m. • New material introduced with continued development of advanced material and core techniques. Prerequisite: Level 1 Psychic Development or permission of instructor. $275.Contact Gilbert Choudury at gchoud@yahoo.com; www.psychicpsychology.org

Life Transitions

Navigating Loss and Grief in Grace with Barbara Hutton • May 22, June 21, July 25 • 12:00 p.m. • A 2-hour class which includes exploration, sharing (totally voluntary) and guided imagery/meditation. An experience held in the context of Wholeness. $35. Contact Barbara Hutton at 734-223-3485 or bdhutton@sbcglobal.net.

Love and Relationships

Creating Your Ideal Mate with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sunday, May 2 • 8:30 a.m. • Has it been lonely in lockdown during the pandemic? Identify your Ideal Mate's qualities (as I did so to manifest my mate of over two decades), learning how to use ceremony, meditation, chanting, movement, fragrances, essences, elixirs, herbs, flowers, colors, shapes, metals, altars with sacred symbols, Archetypal images, and candles. Learn to work to remove blockages, to work through fears and deserving issues, and to trust the Divine Order and Timing! $125. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Kabbalah for Couples with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • May 16, June 13, July 11, August 15 • 3:00 p.m. • Have relationship issues been amplified being quarantined at home with your partner? This is for basically good relationships that both parties are willing to work on, to make their relationship even better, physically, emotionally, mentally, financially, spiritually, and energetically. This two-hour session, one time per month, for about a year, is not couples' therapy, but can help you get your relationship to the place that you always wanted it to be. $205 for 2-hour session (if one or both have taken Beginning Kabbalah). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Meditation

Chakra Meditation: Online Sound Bath with Rob Meyer-Kukan • Sunday, May 2 • 7:00 p.m. • Chakras are thought to be spinning disks of energy that should stay open and aligned, as they correspond to bundles of nerves, major organs, and areas of our energetic body that affect our emotional and physical well-being. This sound bath meditation will aid the listener in finding balance and calm. This sound bath meditation is a donation-based model. If moved, you may do so here: https://paypal.me/robmk. To watch/listen to this sound bath meditation, visit youtube.com/robmeyerkukan. FREE. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com/.

White Tara Guided Healing Meditation with Jewel Heart Instructors • Weekly on Sunday, May 2-August 29 • 9:30 - 10:40 a.m. • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism, known for her quick and compassionate activity. She is particularly associated with healing and long life. Join us for a guided meditation using visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental, and emotional suffering. Free, though donations are welcome. To register, click on the link accompanying this program's listing at jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387, or programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Healing and Compassion Meditations with Hartmut Sagolla • Weekly, Mondays May 3-August 30 • 12 - 1 p.m. • Hartmut Sagolla leads a 30-40-minute guided meditation on a Buddhist theme followed by discussion. Meditations are centered around healing oneself and others and developing compassion. They include concentrated meditation, visualization, and contemplative meditations. Free though donations are welcomed. To register, click on the link accompanying this program's listing at jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or programs@jewelheart.org ; jewelheart.org.

Sufi Chanting, Movement, and Meditations with Imam Kamau Ayubbi • Every Tuesday, May - August • 6:30 p.m. • Sufi study and celebration via Zoom. Donations $5-10 per class. Contact the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

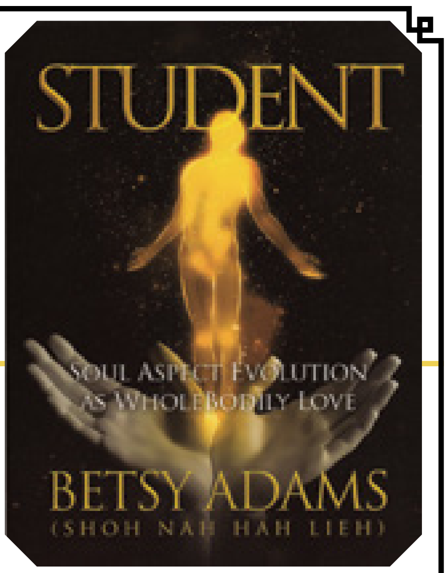
Putting out the Nervous System's Fire: Meditations for Coping in Crisis with Amy Hertz • Friday, May 7 - August 27 • 4-5 p.m. • Settling the mind is tough in the best of times, but when we are hit with circumstances that change our reality, getting access to that part of ourselves that can think clearly and problem solve, becomes nearly impossible. Using the breath, writing exercises, and guided meditations, we'll explore ways to calm the body's threat response and regain balance. Free, though donations welcome. To register, click on the link accompanying this program's listing at jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs. Contact Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or programs@jewelheart.org ; jewelheart.org.

Chakra by Chakra Meditation and Health with Ema Stefanova E-RYT, C-IAYT • Sunday, May 9 • 9:30 a.m. • Chakra Therapy has been our specialty. Guided meditation will be practiced. The chakras (energy centers) will be explained as well as how each governs bodily, mental, and emotional functions. Great visuals will be available for purchase at the end of the session. Contact Ema at YogaAndMeditation.com for more information.

Evolution of WholeBodily Love via soul aspect evolution is at the heart of this new work. How this is done, in this realm, in our Universe is explored: the ego Universe, the Fields of Light, the Sacred Body Factories, the manifestations inhabited by the soul aspect(s) and how they appear here, and how they are related to here, are all explored.

Newly Published

Student: Soul Aspect Evolution As WholeBodily Love



Now Available at Crazy Wisdom!

Betsy Adams (Shoh Nah Hah Lieh) has, since infancy, lived deeply and feelingly "IN" nature, the expressions of nature that arise here in our present home, Planet Earth. She has worked with nature, animals, and humans in her consulting practice of over 40 years and has degrees in Evolutionary Ecology and Creative Writing.

Photo by Nandi Davis

For more information about Betsy, or her books, visit her website at:
spiritualevolutionoftheanimalkingdom.com

or email Betsy at:
shohnahhahlieh@gmail.com

YOU ARE LOVED. ALWAYS, FOREVER, AND INFINITELY LOVED

Mindfully Being Me (A Virtual Day of Mindfulness) with Carol Blotter • May 15 • 9:30 a.m. • Mindfulness is a lifestyle, a way of being open and present. It is saying YES to what is happening right now. One of the most common areas where we say NO is to ourselves. We never measure up to expectations. During this day of mindfulness, we'll explore saying YES to being me… and it's applicable in every situation. Open to All. Donations appreciated. Contact the Weber Center at 517-266-4000 or webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

The Voice of the Gong: Sound Bath Meditation with Rob Meyer-Kukan, LMT • May 15 • 7:00 p.m. • Join Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan at 7 Notes Natural Health for this sonic journey designed to bring deep states of ease, rest, and relaxation. Using over 40 different instruments (singing bowls, gongs, rainstick, drums, and more), Rob will create a soundscape that will immerse you in peace and tranquility. Please bring a mat and any additional supports you would like for your comfort (blankets, pillows, bolster, eye pillow, etc.). Participants are required to wear a face-covering and must have it properly affixed before entering the studio. $25 Advanced Registration Required. Space is limited to 8 participants. Register online by visiting forms.gle/MAjDpeh4WEZcS6Jp7. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com.

Mornings of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy, OP • June 5, July 10, August 7 • 10:00 a.m. • We gather monthly as a Mindfulness Community to deepen our understanding and commitment to daily meditation practice. Reflecting upon our relationships with honesty and courage, we amp up our capacity to be love within family, neighborhood, city, and world. $15; $40 for all three. Contact the Weber Center at 517-266-4000 or webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Seven Notes: Online Sound Bath with Rob Meyer-Kukan • June 6 • 7:00 p.m. • An exploration of the seven notes of the music scale and a celebration of the instruments at 7 Notes. Join Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan for this time of sonic delight designed to help you relax and restore. This sound bath meditation is a donation-based model; to offer a heart-felt donation, visit paypal.me/robmk. To watch or listen to this sound bath meditation, visit youtube.com/robmeyerkukan. FREE. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 96.

Solstice Sound Bath Meditation with Rob Meyer-Kukan • June 19 • 7:00 p.m. • Join Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan of 7 Notes Natural Health for this dedicated time to prepare for the coming season and solstice. Using over 40 different, Rob will create a sound bath meditation that allows you to enter the new season feeling relaxed, calm, and refreshed. Please bring a mat and any additional supports you would like for your comfort (blankets, pillows, bolster, eye pillow, etc. Participants are required to wear a face-covering during this. $25 Advanced Registration Required at forms.gle/MAjDpeh4WEZcS6Jp7. Space is limited to 8 participants. Please note that registration closes on June 18. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com.

Freedom: Online Sound Bath with Rob Meyer-Kukan • July 4 • 7:00 p.m. • Join Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan, for this celebration of FREEDOM on Independence Day. Singing bowls, gongs, chimes, and more will be combined to bring the listener to a space of relaxed freedom. This sound bath meditation is brought to you in a donation-based model; you may donate at paypal.me/robmk. To watch/listen to this sound bath meditation, visit.youtube.com/robmeyerkukan. FREE. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com.

Myriad of Meditations with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sundays beginning July 11 - August 22 • 10:00 a.m. • Meditation is an essential component to spiritual evolution. Learn a myriad of meditation techniques to discover which resonate for you (possibly dissolving years of resistance to mediation). Learn meditations with fire, water, air, earth, with the Four Worlds, with different breathing, with Holy Geometry, sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, spiritual beings, qualities of G-D, with movement, music, toning, colors, scents, gemstones, and trees, including several guided meditations through the Tree of Life. $25 per class. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Connecting with Various G-D Names/Aspects: Heavenly Travel with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sunday, July 18, 25, August 1, 8 • 1:00 p.m. • Learn how to create a sacred, protected space to astral travel safely to the planets associated with the Ten Sephirot (Spheres) in the Tree of Life, to become more deeply acquainted with ten different aspects of G-D. Learn how to connect to the energy of each different aspect of G-D, and the special quality that it represents. You may receive invaluable messages and/or answers to compelling questions. $190 for all 4 parts. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Training for Teaching Youth Mindfulness (2-day workshop) with Rita Benn, Kristin Ervin, and Mary Spence • Tuesday & Wednesday, Aug 3 - 4 • 9:00 a.m. • Educators and mental health professionals will learn to translate their personal practice of mindfulness into the classroom and clinical setting. We will share ideas on how to address our collective trauma using the skills of mindfulness. We will focus specifically on adapting key mindfulness practices for emotion regulation and stress management. Participants will explore teaching these practices in breakouts with their peers under the guidance of the instructors. Scripts and handouts will be provided. Participants will have opportunity to take time in restorative mindfulness practice in a retreat like, nature setting by the lake. CEU's and SCECH's provided. $255 by July 15; $295 after this date. Contact info@mc4me.org.

Oasis of Sound: Sound Bath Meditation with Rob Meyer-Kukan • Saturday, August 14 • 7:00 p.m. • Join Sound Therapist, Rob Meyer-Kukan as he weaves together and oasis of sound with sing bowls, gongs, therapeutic harp and more. Allow the soothing tones of these instruments to transport you to a sacred space of calm and relaxation. Please bring a mat and any additional supports you would like for your comfort (blankets, pillows, bolster, eye pillow, etc.). Participants are required to wear a face-covering during this offering. $25. Advanced registration required at forms.gle/72E7xdpr2mtcCdZc7. Space is limited to 8 participants. Please note that registration closes on August 13. Contact 7 Notes Natural Health at 248-962-5475 or rob@robmeyerkukan.com; robmeyerkukan.com.

Chakra by Chakra Meditation and Health with Ema Stefanova E-RYT, C-IAYT • Sunday, May 9 • 9:30 a.m. • Chakra Therapy has been our specialty. Guided meditation will be practiced, the chakras (energy centers) will be explained, as well as how each chakra governs body, mental, and emotional functions. Great visuals will be available for purchase at the end of the session. Contact Ema at YogaAndMeditation.com.

Music, Sound, and Voice Singing for Comfort (via Zoom) with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Second Thursdays: May 13, June 10, July 8, August 12 • 7:00 p.m. • Music and song for comfort. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

Personal Growth

Brand New Beginning Kabbalah: Kabbalah Miracles with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Monthly, first Tuesdays: May 4, June 1, July 6, August 3 • 7:45 p.m. • This life-changing journey is an ordered, systematic approach to develop and balance all the important areas of life. Rather than utilizing so much energy RESISTING, we utilize that liberated energy for CREATING, which puts us on a similar vibration as our Creator. We become empowered to join with G-D and become co-creative, proactive manifestors of our dreams, desires, and goals, open to MIRACLES, and fulfilling our destinies. Monthly Course Rate - $137/person; Monthly Semi-Private (2 people) Rate - $150/person; Monthly Private (1 person) Rate - $120/hour (based on time utilized). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Brand New Beginning Kabbalah: Kabbalah Miracles with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Friday, May 7, June 4, July 9, August 6 • 8:15 a.m. • This life-changing journey is an ordered, systematic approach to develop and balance all the important areas of life. Rather than utilizing so much energy RESISTING, we utilize that liberated energy for CREATING, which puts us on a similar vibration as our Creator. We become empowered to join with G-D and become co-creative, proactive manifestors of our dreams, desires, and goals, open to MIRACLES, and fulfilling our destinies. Monthly Course Rate - $137/person; Monthly Semi-Private (2 people) Rate - $150/person; Monthly Private (1 person) Rate - $120/hour (based on time utilized). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Healthy Boundaries with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sunday, August 29 • 12:00 p.m. • Learn how to define healthy boundaries for, and with yourself, how to set and enforce them (without caving in), and how to respect others' boundaries in all kinds of personal and professional relationships and situations. Role play is a chief learning tool in the work. $55. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

A Life of Mythic Proportions with Mara Evenstar • Friday, May 7, 14, 21• 7:00 p.m. • In this workshop, Mara Evenstar will guide you through a process of experiencing the power of telling your story using ancient and modern symbols, archetypes, cultural references, and elements of mythology. Telling your story in this manner is empowering and healing. No background in symbolism or mythology is required. $108. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071 or evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.html.

Prosperity and Abundance

Doula Business Development Workshop with Patty Brennan • Saturday, June 19 • 8:30 a.m. • Visioning, launching, and growing a business is a creative act. It necessarily involves getting outside of your comfort zone, the humility to be a novice, and a willingness to learn. The payoff is becoming one of those rare people who loves their job, who gets paid for doing work you were born to do, on your own terms. $220; $200 early bird. Contact Patty at 734-663-1523 or patty@lifespandoulas.com; LifespanDoulas.com.

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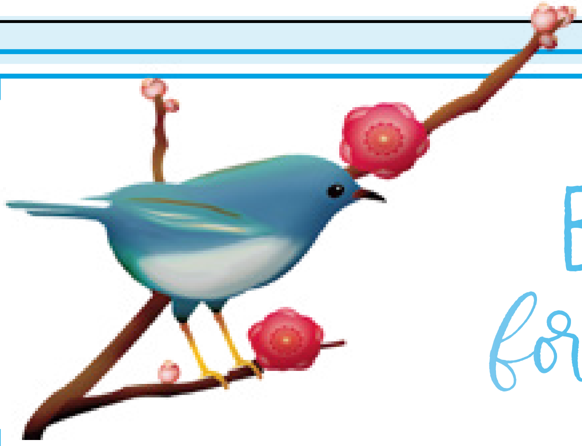

BOWENWORK for Gentle Healing

By Lisa Teets

I had been suffering from neck and shoulder pain for many years due to a car accident. Although weekly chiropractic and massage helped, my problems never fully resolved. Over the years I tried many healing modalities with no lasting relief until a friend suggested I try Bowenwork. I found a practitioner and gave it a try. Since I was used to vigorous massages, I was surprised with how little force was used with Bowenwork. After the second session, I started noticing some wonderful changes. Eventually, my neck and shoulder issues resolved, as well as other issues that I had not communicated to my practitioner.

Bowenwork can provide relief for many types of injuries and health problems, both acute and chronic, and it does so holistically, via the body's innate healing mechanisms. It offers tremendous benefit to clients by using a dynamic system of muscle and connective tissue therapy that stimulates the body to heal itself, often profoundly.

The Bowenwork delivers signals to the nervous system at specific locations (on muscles, tendons, ligaments, or nerves), and the body responds in its own time, sometimes for days after a session. Bowenwork is appropriate for people of all ages, in all degrees of health. I usually find myself working with clients whose conditions have developed gradually over many years, when patterns of dysfunctional muscle recruitment and posture have become entrenched over time.

Bowenwork uses a "whole-body" approach to facilitate optimal alignment and recovery. Rather than focusing on a single complaint, I address the entire body, by restoring balance via the autonomic nervous system (ANS). The ANS controls over 80% of bodily functions and is very susceptible to external stressors.

Most people today, even children, live in a constant state of high stress, overstimulation (fight, flight, or freeze mode). Healing can occur only after the ANS shifts from sympathetic to parasympathetic dominance (rest, relax, and repair mode). Bowenwork enables that shift. During a session, the client often drops into deep relaxation, indicative of a profound release from stress and a shift toward parasympathetic influence. This shift could explain, in part, the common observation that a Bowenwork session seems to reactivate the recovery process in situations where healing from trauma, sickness or surgery has stalled or reached a plateau.

Clients usually lie on a massage table or may be seated in a chair. A 20 to 60-minute session involves one or more procedures, each of which consists of several sets of moves. The moves are gentle, but purposeful, and can be done through light clothing. I use my fingers and thumbs to make gentle rolling moves over soft tissue (muscles, ligaments, tendons, nerves, fascia). There are absolutely no harsh manipulations or adjustments, in fact, people are usually amazed at how something so gentle can be so powerful. I address the body as a whole, respecting the fact that the body knows how to heal itself given the right cues.

A unique aspect of Bowenwork is the frequent pauses where I give the body & brain time to integrate, process & respond to the information it just received. Between each set of moves, I incorporate pauses for as many minutes as are needed for the client's body to begin responding. As the nervous system begins to adjust the tension level in the muscles, I can sense when the client is ready for the next set of moves. This differs greatly from other therapies where there is constant stimuli, sometimes too much for the brain to process in an effective manner.

It's important to understand that Bowenwork is not a cure for any ailment. Instead, it activates the body's own healing abilities. It has been found through experience and research that Bowenwork has assisted people with the following health complaints: digestive, urinary, respiratory, balance and reproductive issues, back, knee, pelvic, shoulder, pinched nerve and neck pain, scoliosis, tinnitus, TMJ, migraine, PTSD, sciatica, and restless leg syndrome, frozen shoulder, chronic fatigue syndrome, and many more.

Bowenwork can have a profound effect on children and babies too. It can help to relieve colic, latch, bed wetting, ADD, and more. Babies can be held in your arms during a five to 20-minute session and children can move about if needed. It is very gentle, and most children really look forward to the sessions.

Lisa Teets offers Bowenwork4Kids as a way to introduce families to the work. She runs Bowenwork4Kids on the 3rd Sunday of the month by appointment near downtown Ypsilanti. Schedule by texting 734-678-4791. Teets is a Bowenwork certified professional practitioner since 2010, is "advanced specialized procedure trained," and is a certified yoga and Pilates teacher. You can find out more about Teets and Bowenwork online at bowenfix.com.

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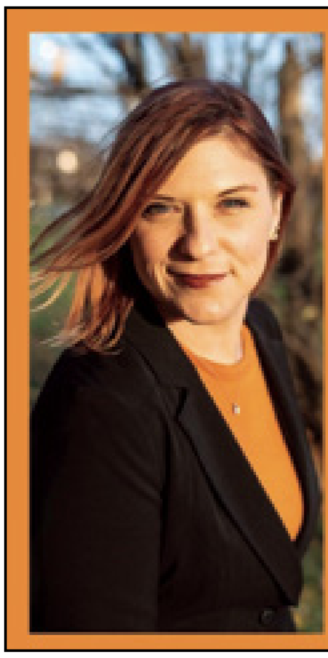

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Artwork by Logynn Hailley

Reiki

Reiki Level 1 (In Person) with Julie Sottek • Monthly on Saturday, May 15, June 19, July 17, August 14 • 11 a.m.-6 p.m. • Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes a healing lifestyle. Level 1 is your introduction course where you will learn what is Reiki, the history, and tools for self-treatment and giving to others. Level 1 Course includes certificate and materials. Light snacks and water will be provided. Students should dress comfortably, bring a notebook to journal and lunch. Limited participants. $75 deposit required at registration. $150 Level 1 only, $290 Level 1 & 2 combined. LARA and State of Michigan health protocols will be practiced including face coverings and 6-foot distancing. Contact Julie Sottek at 517-917-7910 or dragonflydeo@gmail.com; dragonflydeo.com.

Reiki Level 2 (In Person) with Julie Sottek • May 29, June 26, July 24, August 21 • 11 a.m.- 6 p.m. • Prerequisite: Reiki Level 1. Level 2 Course is a combination of lecture, discussion, demonstration, and practice time. Each student will experience giving & receiving a complete session using Byosen scanning and the hand placement system. We will practice using all the Reiki 2 symbols as well as the techniques mentioned level 1. Level 2 Course includes certificate and materials. Light snacks and water will be provided. Students should dress comfortably, bring a notebook to journal and lunch. Limited participants. $75 deposit required at registration. $150 Level 2 Only*, $290 Level 1&2. LARA and State of Michigan health protocols will be practiced including face coverings and 6-foot distancing. Contact Julie Sottek at 517-917-7910 or dragonflydeo@gmail.com; dragonflydeo.com.

Reiki Level 2 with Mara Evenstar and Krystal Rain • May 15 - 16 • 1:00 p.m. • In addition to receiving two Reiki 2 attunements, the learning focus for this level is to work with the Reiki symbols, directly learning their functions and applications; learn how to use Reiki for distance healing and to practice doing Reiki treatments on others. $140. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071 or evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.html.

Retreats

JissoJi Half-day Sitting with Marta Dabis • Monthly, second Sundays: May 9, June 13, July 11, August 8 • 8:20 a.m. • Traditional Zen meditation in the lineage of Shrunyu Suzuki. Three rounds of 40-minute sitting with 10-minute walking, followed by a Dharma talk by a guest teacher. Joining for part of the program.is also available. Donations accepted. Contact Marta Dabis at 248-202-3102 or JissoJiZen@gmail.com; JissoJiZen.org.

Holistic Yoga and Meditation Weekend Retreat with Ema Stefanova, E-RYT500, C-IAYT • Friday, May 14 • 5:00 p.m. • Enhance your health and well-being whether you are a beginner or a yoga teacher, fit or out of shape. Experience peace, enjoy expert guidance, vegetarian meals, Lake Michigan sunsets, the Shrine Trail, and 110 acres of beautiful non-farming land. Yoga Teachers and Therapists earn continuing education hours with YA/IAYT. $445/$845 for two. Contact Ema at emastefanova@cs.com to register and visit YogaAndMeditation.com for more details.

Yoga Retreat with Austeen Freeman • Thursday - Sunday, June 3 - June 6 • 12:00 p.m. • A place to let loose, relax, and dedicate time to you. Enter another world for 4 days and 3 nights in Thompsonville, MI nestled along a beautiful river near Crystal Mountain. This is for all yoga levels and experience. The schedule will include 5 yoga sessions, 2 journaling sessions, all meals and local wine included; plenty of free time dedicated to you, personalized Yoga, rest, and rejuvenation. Only 12 spots available. You must enroll in a payment plan or pay in entirety for your spot to be reserved. There are two options: $420 for a tent space (only two spaces) and $460 for an in-house bed. Some rooms are shared and may be co-ed. To reserve discounted tent price, enter coupon Tent on check out. Use ticket link to purchase your ticket. Refund Policy: 75% refund up to 90 days prior to retreat. 50% refunded up to 30 days prior to retreat. Cutoff date will be May 6. $460. Contact austeen.freeman@gmail.com for the retreat daily schedule and payment plan options.

Heart Sutra with Demo Rinpoche • Friday, June 18, Saturday, June 19, 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday, June 20, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. • The Heart Sutra, one of Buddha's greatest gifts to humanity, is a quintessential teaching on the true nature of reality. $180/Jewel Heart Members, $225/Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website's retreat page at jewelheart.org/retreats. For more information, call Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or message programs@jewelheart.org.

The A-B-C's (and D-E-F-G's) of Light Body (2-day course via Zoom) with Karlta Zarley, RN, CHTP • June 19, 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and June 20, 1 - 5:30 p.m. • We will be reviewing the basics about Light Body transformation and then going on to more advanced material. You will get to assess where you are in this process. Registration deadline is June 10. Attendance is limited to the first 12 people so there is plenty of time for Q&A. $110. Contact Karlta Zarley at 734-834-1566 or kzarley88@gmail.com.

Joyful Summer Retreat: Kingdom of the Mind—Mind and Mental Faculties with Demo Rinpoche • Friday, August 20 - Sunday, August 29, 8:30 a.m. • The mind is mirror-like, luminous, and rich with possibility. Yet, when obscured by negative thoughts and emotions, we experience life as confusing and harsh. Come explore the mind and its inner workings and gain understanding of how we can fulfill our greatest potential. $475/Jewel Heart Members, $550/Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website's retreat page at jewelheart.org /retreats. For more information, call Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or email to programs@jewelheart.org.

On May 1, 2021, The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal will be available on our website: www.crazywisdomjournal.com.

Shamanism

Shamanism, Death, and Dying with Connie Eiland • Saturday, May 1 • 10:00 a.m. • This workshop heightens our spiritual understanding of death and dying and teaches ways to assist others as they approach this transition. Psychopomp and ceremony are included. $180 until April 17 when price increases to $220. Contact Connie Eiland at 248-809-3230 or clshebear7@gmail.com; shewolfshaman.com.

Journeying Circle with Judy Liu Ramsey • Monthly, every first and third Thursday, beginning May 6 • 7:00 p.m. • Join others in shamanic journeying to explore current topics and to achieve balance in your life and on the planet. Must know how to journey. No cost. Suggested donation is $15-40. Contact Judy Liu Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; https://JudyRamsey.net.

Introduction to Journeying with Connie Lee Eiland, Shamanic Practitioner • May 23, August 8 • 9:45 a.m. • 6 hr. class includes power animal retrieval and journeys to Upper, Lower, and Middle Worlds. Journeying is with drums and rattles. I have added instruction in long distance power animal retrieval. $70 until two weeks before, then price goes to $80. Contact Connie Lee Eiland at 248-809-3230 or clshebear7@gmail.com; SheWolfShaman.com.

Healing with Spiritual Light with Connie Lee Eiland, Shamanic Practitioner • June 12 • 10:00 a.m. • This class teaches transfiguration, bringing quantum physics in as we work with the unlimited powers of the universe. In Healing with Spiritual Light, we become the Light. Healing is through the Law of Resonance. This method doesn't see the client as ill. $180 until May 29, then $220. Contact Connie Lee Eiland at 248-809-3230 or clshebear7@gmail.com; shewolfshaman.com.

Basic Shamanic Journeying: The Art of Shamanism for Practical and Visionary Purposes in Daily Life with Judy Liu Ramsey • July 10,11 • 9:00 a.m. • The shamanic journey is an easy and powerful tool we can use to access spiritual guidance. In this class, you will meet and begin to develop a relationship with a compassionate spirit or power animal who is coming forward to help you at this time in your life. You will learn techniques to help you develop a self-directed practice of empowerment, allowing you to move safely, intentionally through the world in a balanced way. This class is a prerequisite to ongoing and more advanced shamanic studies. $140. $160 if paid after July 1. Contact Judy Liu Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; https://JudyRamsey.net.

> When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, I used everything you gave me.
>
> — Erma Bombeck

Connection & Empowerment with Connie Eiland, Shamanic Practitioner • Saturday, July 10 • 10:00 a.m. • With journeys and divination, this class will advance your skills and improve your connection to Spirit and the web of Life. It will help clarify and strengthen your personal power. Time will be spent partly in nature to assemble a medicine bundle. Ceremony and initiation are included. $180 till June 26, then $220. Contact Connie Eiland at 248-809-3230 or clshebear7@gmail.com; shewolfshaman.com.

The Nameless Art: A Year and a Day, Course in Primal Celtic Shamanism (Personal Practice Path) Rocky Rains • Multiple dates & times: See website. • In the spirit of the ancient Mystery Schools, this journey will not be merely a course of book-learning (though it will include some of that), sojourners on this transformative path will be guided and taught by an experienced seer and spiritual way shower, and by the Gods and Ancestors of Gaelic and Welsh traditions, the Spirits of the Land, and the sacred Earth Herself—through storytelling, spiritual direction, meditation, the skillful, poetic employment of ancient Celtic myth and symbolism, immersion in natural landscapes, and the facilitation of powerful esoteric practice, liturgy, and communal connection. $650. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071; evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.html.

The Nameless Art: A Year and a Day, (4 weekend Course in Primal Celtic Shamanism—Initiatory Path) Rocky Rains • Multiple dates & times. See website. • This is an initiation into Primal Celtic Shamanism, for those who would serve others as Shaman. In the spirit of the ancient Mystery Schools, this journey will not be merely a course of book-learning (though it will include some of that), sojourners on this transformative path will be guided and taught by an experienced seer and spiritual way shower, and by the Gods and Ancestors of Gaelic and Welsh traditions, the Spirits of the Land, and the sacred Earth Herself—through storytelling, spiritual direction, meditation, the skillful, poetic employment of ancient Celtic myth and symbolism, immersion in natural landscapes, and the facilitation of powerful esoteric practice, liturgy, and communal connection. $1500. Contact Susan Billmaier at 734-678-2071 or evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.html.

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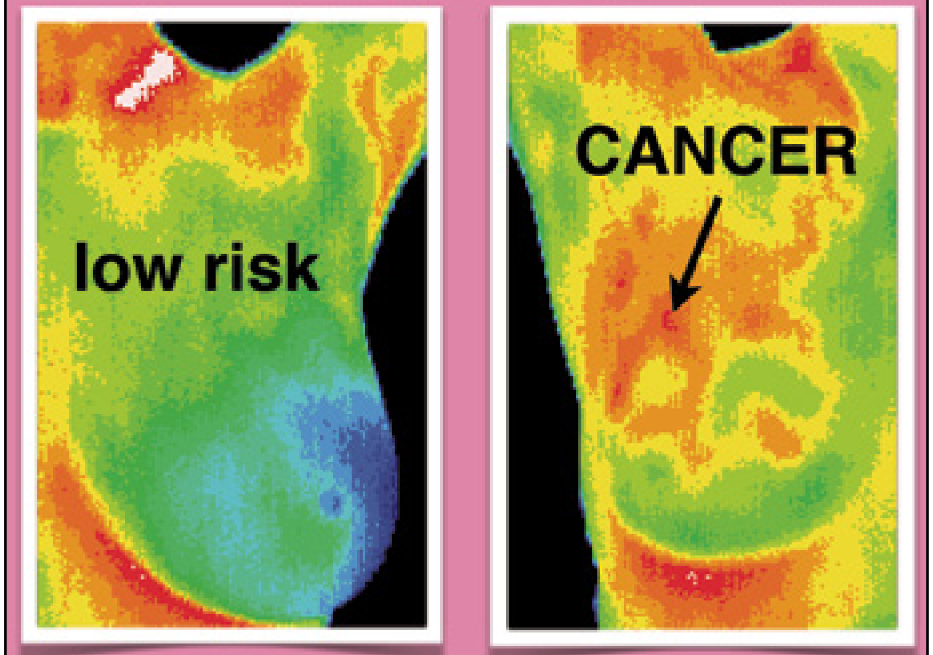

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Live Love— Share the Hearts

By Michael Oliver

As I embarked on my journey into 2020, I found my fellow human beings becoming increasingly angry, fearful, and distrustful of each other. I asked myself this question, "Is this who we really are?" It felt like the negative and dark energy hiding in the shadows finally found a doorway. So many triggers appeared, and they would consistently attempt to flip the switches of light, to darkness. At times it felt terribly dark and other times, it felt like light was returning. It is a battle that continues today, but is not a new battle; it is a different battle.

What is different about this battle, you may ask? Awareness! Yes, we are more aware of what was lurking in the darkness than we were in the past. Humans are waking up! And it is in that process of waking up that we are learning to acknowledge the ways of the past that have been damaging to our species and limiting our growth toward living a life of love and joy. For me, 2020 triggered a deep and self-reflective time. I kept pondering over what I could do to make life for humanity better, and I came up with the Share the Hearts Campaign.

> **We are more aware of what was lurking in the darkness than we were in the past.**

The Share the Hearts Campaign was inspired by Dr. Kenneth McCulley who founded a human potential development program which included a poem titled *I Live Love Every Moment of My Life*. In that poem, Dr. McCulley's primary message was to wake people up to the reality that we all come from the same source and as such, we are all brothers and sisters, one and the same. It was Dr. McCulley's dream that all humans demonstrate, unconditionally, Living Love—performing acts of kindness for their fellow human beings. Motivated by the energy and effort of Dr. McCulley, our team wanted to build a campaign that would operationalize that message to the world.

Sharing a simple wooden heart can make a difference! Every act of kindness, thoughtfulness, caring, and copassion, is an act of living a life of love—as the Beatles once sang, "All We Need is Love." True! What a difference love can make.

> **Every act of kindness, thoughtfulness, caring, and compassion, is an act of living a life of love.**

Mindtation, a small start-up company, is on a mission to help people find their paths of joy, because when people are living their joy, they live a life that is aligned with who they truly are, living in and experiencing positive synchronicities. We decided that we wanted to do something fun, yet meaningful, to engage people back into love consciousness and help them along with aligning with their true selves.

Along with teaching the power of meditation, the breath, mindfulness, intuition and sound, we are initiating the Share the Hearts campaign to help spread loving kindness. Wondering how it works? Small packets of wooden hearts are purchased from our website and then you can give them to people you "catch" doing acts of loving kindness. In the packet, there is a heart and a card explaining the purpose of this event. Each one of us will be the eyes of the change we want to see. This act, this awareness, plants the seed of love and kindness into one's consciousness—making it grow each time it is acknowledged within someone else. Each time a wooden heart is given for an act of kindness, it reinforces love and kindness within yourself (the giver) as well as expanding the consciousness of love in others (the receivers).

At the deepest level, we are all one and the same. *As Peter Yarrow said,* "There is only one river. There is only one sea. And it flows through you, and it flows through me. There is only one people. We are one and the same." The kick-off for Mindtation's Sharing the Hearts Campaign took place on April 9th, 2021. To kick-off the event, Mindtation presented a video providing an overview of what it means to live in joy and love—especially during stressful times and the many benefits that it can bring. The purpose of this campaign is to bring us back to loving kindness and mindfulness...bring us back to awareness of our own humanity.

Let's re-learn how to respond to all situations with love. The goal is to put the intention of Living Love, our Truth, back into the world.

If you are interested in this campaign and would like to learn more, please visit Sharethehearts.com. A percentage of all heart package purchases will be donated to select charities.

Spiritual Development

***A Course in Miracles* Study Group (via Zoom) with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Every Monday beginning May 3 • 6:45 p.m.** • The book, written by Helen Schucman, is based on the idea that the greatest "miracle" is the act of simply gaining a full "awareness of love's presence" personally. The author asserts the work was dictated to her directly from Christ. Explore the course as a group. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270. interfaithspirit.org.

Metaphysics of Spirituality Study Group (via Zoom) with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Every Wednesday, beginning May 5 • 9:15 A.M. • Study of Metaphysics. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

***A Course in Miracles* Study Group (via Zoom) with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Every Thursday, beginning May 6 • 12:00 p.m.** • The book, written by Helen Schucman, is based on the idea that the greatest "miracle" is the act of simply gaining a full "awareness of love's presence" personally. The author asserts the work was dictated to her directly from Christ. Explore the course as a group. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

The Science of Mind Study Group (via Zoom) with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • May 12, 26. June 9, 23. July 14, 28. Aug 11, 25 • 6:30 p.m. • *The Science of Mind* by Ernest Holmes suggests a new way to see connections between humans and God. The author is the founder of Religious Science. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

Midrash Study with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Friday, May 14, June 11, July 9, August 6 • 3:00 p.m. • The written version of the Old Testament (Torah) tells a story. What has been passed down orally for thousands of years is the backstory and various mystical, hidden meanings. It is rich, colorful, detailed, and compiles interesting data like who ascended to Heaven alive, who was so righteous that their deceased bodies never decomposed, the seven things that we are not permitted to know in human form. $150 per month for the monthly study (one 3-hour session per month); $150 per month for the bi-monthly study (two 1½-hour sessions per month); $150 per month for the weekly study (approximately four 1-hour sessions per month). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Peace Generator (via Zoom) with Craig Harvey • Friday, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20 • 7:00 p.m. • Meditate, pray, and set intentions for peace. Free, but donations appreciated. Contact Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth at 734-327-0270; interfaithspirit.org.

Connecting with Archangels - Parts 1, 2, 3, & 4 with Karen Greenberg, R.P.T., Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner • Sundays, May 30, June 6, 13, 27 • 9:00 a.m. • Become acquainted with the various Archangels represented in the Sephirot (Spheres) in the Tree of Life. Learn who the Archangels are, what they each do, how to create a sacred, protected space, whom to call for specific assistance, and how to safely call upon them. Connect -- Ask Questions—Often Receive Helpful Information.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

$180 for all 4 parts. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Catholicity in an Evolving Global Church with Massimo Faggioli, PhD • Thursday, June 10 • 7:00 p.m. • Pope Francis' pontificate represents a threshold: there is a liminality to Francis's papacy that opens Catholicism toward a new sense of the global dimension. This started with his very election in the conclave of 2013 and symbolizes the entire pontificate and its meaning for global Catholicism. This new phase toward a new relationship between Catholicism and globalization means a new comprehension of the geography of the Church, of the relationship with different religious traditions, and civil coexistence in one human family. Open to all. Donations appreciated. Contact the Weber Center at webercenter@adriandominicans.org or 517-266-4000.

Stress Management

The Complete Yoga and Meditation Stress Management Course with Ema Stefanova E-RYT500, C-IAYT • Saturday & Sunday, May 29 - 30 • 12:00 p.m. • Our holistic, well-balanced, evidence-supported courses are the fruit of APD/ YACEP's rich teaching experience internationally in clinical settings, workplaces, at schools and in her own private practice. They consist of easy-to-administer techniques carefully chosen for their benefits and come complete with contraindications. Participants will learn techniques, gain practical skills, and valuable insights, improve and develop fluency, accuracy, confidence, and competence when working with these highly effective techniques. Our courses will equip you with powerful tools to help clients and students manage health, relieve and eliminate stress from daily life, at work, and in the broadest sense possible. See website for cost. Open to the public. Contact Ema at EmaStefanova@cs.com or YogaAndMeditation.com.

Traumatic Incident Reduction Workshop (5-day workshop) with Marian Volkman • June 15 - 19 or August 3 - 7 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily • Practical Trauma and Stress Resolution. Move Beyond Symptom Management to Effective Trauma Recovery. Continuing Education credit available for Social Workers. Learn to use Traumatic Incident Reduction (TIR) effective for reducing and eliminating after-effects from: stress, difficult relationships, any upsetting, severe or shocking event, war or any trauma (either received, caused or observed including domestic violence), accidents and injuries, losses of all kinds, and unwanted feelings or thoughts. $695. Contact marian@tir.org 734-662-6864; appliedmetapsychology.org/professional-training/meet-the-trainers/marian-volkman.

Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Self Defense

Yang & Chen Tai Chi: Beginning/Intermediate with Karla Groesbeck • On-going, Everyday • Visit website for course times • Multiple classes: Qigong & Easy Tai Chi, Tai Chi for Mobility Maintenance, Yang & Chen Long & Short Forms. Free/Low Fee. Contact Karla Groesbeck at 734-325-4CHI or info@taichilove.com; taichilove.com.

Classes with Asian Martial Arts Studio • Ongoing, In-Person classes. Visit website for dates/times • Martial arts classes include Aikido, Kung Fu, Karate, Tai Chi, Wing Chun, and Lion Dance with the goals of developing a truthful knowledge of the fundamental elements of our martial arts traditions and their roots in Asian culture. Children's classes offered also. Contact Asian Martial Arts Studio at 734-994-3620 or info@a2a.m.as.com; or visit a2a.m.as.com.

Writing and Poetry

The Welcome Greening of Spring—A creative Writing Workshop (online) with Tarianne DeYonker, OP, MSW • Saturday, May 15 • 10:00 a.m. • Witnessing how Nature comes back to life each year, writers also arise from winter's dormancy to new life with our writing. In this workshop we put pen to paper in personal writing time and gain feedback from other supportive writers. Beginning and experienced writers are welcome. $30. Registration Required. Contact the Weber Center at webercenter@adriandominicans.org or 517-266-4000.

The Benefits of Joining a Revision Group (on Zoom) with Josie Schneider • Tuesday, May 18 • 6:00 p.m. • Here at Write-On! an evolution has occurred in how we conduct our revision groups. Zoom meetings turned out to be a great discovery for everyone's improved writing. In the meetings, the deep-dive observations of others unearth the problems and virtues of not only your writing samples, but also of your thinking and approach to writing. Come see if a zoom revision group is right for you. $5. Contact us at meetup.com/Write-On-Ann-Arbor/events/277081573/.

Sit. Stop. Write. Zen and Poetry workshop with Dmitry Berenson • Sunday, May 23, June 27, July 25, August 22 • 1:15 p.m. • Like a plant that grows out of bare ground, to express ourselves in poetry we must start from an empty place. We will do a little meditation and reading from Zen and other sources to help us touch that place and then spring out to write our own poetry. Find your seat; find your voice. Donations only. Contact Marta Dabis at 248-202-3102 or JissojiZen@gmail.com; JissoJiZen.org.

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Since 1982, Crazy Wisdom has served as a regional resource for information in the areas of holistic health and integrative medicine, bodymind therapies, psychology and personal growth, Buddhism, spiritual development, and consciousness.

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Back to Basic Health With Juli Johnson

By Chris Watkins

Imagine receiving results from an air quality and blood test showing that your home needs remediation—and so does your body. There were astronomical levels of mold and fungus in your blood. You suffered from pneumonia and had so many x-rays taken that you almost glowed in the dark. The medications prescribed were barely treating the symptoms but were further depleting your already near-extinct immune system. Your doctors finally admit that they have no effective options for your condition; their final suggestion was to wait and see if your body began to win the fight on its own.

This was my case just four years ago. So, what do you do when your traditional medical team delivers this type of optionless news? One thing working in my favor was my chiropractor, Dr. Siiri Krygowski. Witnessing firsthand my breathing episodes during an appointment, she recommended a visit with holistic practitioner, Juli Johnson, and shared the amazing results from her own personal experiences.

At my first appointment with Johnson, she performed a non-invasive scan using ZYTO technology. This is a method of measuring energy along the meridians—energy pathways in our body. According to the principles of Chinese medicine, we have 14 meridians, and each is associated with an organ in the body. The scan creates a profile of your body's out of balance conditions. From those results, she prescribed some lifestyle changes and supplements to correct the imbalance. To date, I haven't experienced another coughing episode. It's been four years and counting. At my follow up pulmonary appointment, my doctor was amazed at the cleared condition. He noted my variety of treatments to pass on to other patients. There were other things I did that also had a definite impact on my healing, but the impact of the services from Johnson were key to bringing all the pieces together for my recovery.

> **This was my case just four years ago. So, what do you do when your traditional medical team delivers this type of optionless news?**

The best health recovery occurs in the presence of quality advantages and multiple options for treatment tailored to an individual's condition. This is what practitioners like Juli Johnson offer—options that coexist with traditional medicine, using basic, natural, and non-invasive methods to restore a body back to health.

What better way to discover all the phenomenal, innovative, and effective treatment options and services Johnson offers, than to ask Johnson herself!

When entering her office, you're immediately met with a serene and peaceful atmosphere, filled with the faint smells of herbal aromas. One of my favorite treats is when she willingly brings in her fur baby Frankie, a beautiful black and white Newfoundland, to sit in on my appointments. Since my pup passed away, he is part of my treatment and loves the hugs and petting. Johnson brings Frankie in only upon request. I sit down to interview Johnson and learn more about her and what the Back to Basics Health and Nutrition experience offers.

> **Everyone is dealing with some type of toxic overload. Even if you feel good, there are toxins at work and they will eventually show up.**

When asked about her background, Johnson responds, "I've been in the natural health field for 18 years and began my journey as a practical nurse in cardiology and internal medicine. After struggling with multiple health issues and getting nowhere fast, a series of serendipitous events led me away from the allopathic world and into a new career as a certified massage therapist. It was then I met a young man who was struggling to overcome the effects of chemotherapy. He was on a quest to learn more about healing with nutrition. I stayed with massage therapy for a short while, but my interest turned to other natural healing modalities rather quickly."

Desiring further education, Johnson completed her ACNC (Advanced Certified Nutritional Counselor) and ND (Naturopathic Doctor) programs through Trinity School of Natural Health. Johnson worked hard and is proud of her full-time holistic health practice in South Lyon specializing in nutrition, detoxification, mineral balancing, and emotional healing. She enjoys teaching on multiple health topics and regularly speaks for local and national health systems. Johnson has also held screening and educational sessions using a basic ZYTO test for willing customers in local Better Health Stores. This gives the customer a very basic understanding of what they may benefit from regarding their needs for nutrients.

> **After struggling with multiple health issues and getting nowhere fast, a series of serendipitous events led me away from the allopathic world and into a new career as a certified massage therapist... I stayed with massage therapy for a short while, but my interest turned to other natural healing modalities rather quickly. –Juli Johnson**

With ever-increasing information and developments in the world of health, nutrition, and medical maladies, how does Johnson maintain her edge? She says that she has had lots of other training and keeps up with new modalities, or she refines the ones she currently uses by attending seminars and conferences on a regular basis.

Johnson specializes in detoxification for mind, body, and spirit. Detoxification wasn't her first thought when she started in the natural health world, even though that's what she focused on for her own health recovery. Everyone is dealing with some type of toxic overload. Even if you feel good, there are toxins at work and they will eventually show up. After learning about the most effective ways of detoxification, Johnson started to incorporate them into her business.

The ZYTO technology offers a method of measuring the body's energy flow. Energy changes before chemistry. ZYTO Biocommunication Testing (electro-dermal screening) creates a profile of your entire system, which includes your body's out of balance conditions or reactions in seven key areas. Foods for Wellness scans, EVOX (which is perception reframing), and Allergy testing are other popular scans that Johnson performs, but there is so much more offered. A complete list of services is on Johnson's website which includes links that give a brief description of all testing methods used, as well as her office hours.

Johnson currently has three other practitioners working with her who provide a variety of services. Colon hydrotherapy, and the near infrared sauna, are popular services. Back to Basics holds classes on: making tinctures (concentrated herbal extracts), teas, crystals, weight loss, and general health principles, and they offer wellness days that feature make and take gifts, foot detoxes, foods for wellness scans, astrology and intuitive readings, crystal readings, chakra balancing, and more.

When someone comes in to see Johnson, she/he receives one hour of her undivided attention and they go over all of that client's concerns. She scans to find out which organs are in need of support, and depending on what the situation is, the client will get a recommendation for one or more methods of detox, and recommendations for nutritional support. She also provides a gift of a Bach flower remedy combination specific to the person. Johnson says, "Everyone is unique and has individual needs. Some respond well with herbs and tinctures, some with nutrients, some with homeopathy. I support the mind, body, and spirit of each of my clients. They get an education when they come to see me!"

For more information about services provided by Back to Basics, contact Juli Johnson at 248-921.0586 or visit her website, back2basicshealth.com. The office is located at 125 West Lake Street, in South Lyon, Michigan.

Writing and Poetry, cont.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Workshop (via Zoom) with Edward Morin, David Jibson, and Lissa Perrin • Monthly, Second Wednesdays: May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Workshop at Crazy Wisdom Tearoom. All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m. Until further notice, all sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom. Email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com for Zoom link. Free. Contact Edward at 734-668-7523 or eacmorso@sbcglobal.net; https://cwcircle.poetry.blog/.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Featured Readers (via Zoom) with Carolyne Wright, Kelly Fordon, and William Trowbridge • Wednesday, May 26, June 23, July 28 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Each night one featured reader will share for 50 minutes, followed by an open mic reading for one hour. All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m. Wright will share in May, Fordon in June, and Trowbridge in July. Until further notice, all sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom. Email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com for Zoom link. Free. Contact Edward at 734-668-7523 or eacmorso@sbcglobal.net; https://cwcircle.poetry.blog/.

Complex Character Building in Multiple Timelines with Lexi Mohney and Eric Lockwood • Wednesday, June 16 • 6:00 p.m. • A Quick and dirty tutorial from two talented writers on how to build characters that can age well, travel through time, and incarnate into other bodies. Basically, creating a character that can do anything time-related. $5. Contact Clementine at fitfundone@gmail.com.

Writers' Workshop: Summer Flourishings with Tarianne DeYonker, OP, MSW • Thursdays, July 15, July 22, July 29, and August 5 • 6:00 p.m. • Come gather with other creative writers for time set aside to express what's been hidden inside but longs to enjoy the light of long summer days. Whether you write as spiritual practice or to give creative expression to your ideas and feelings, consider joining a supportive group of writers and invest the time. Cost: $80 full series. Registration Required. Contact the Weber Center at webercenter@adriandominicans.org or 517-266-4000.

How to Get Your Children's Book Illustrated and Published with Upasna Kakroo • Saturday, July 17 • 12:00 p.m. • Upasna Kakroo, illustrator and co-author of the children's book *Lil' Danny Runs A Race,* will share her journey of how to get from concept to finished product in the genre of Children's Literature. $5. Contact Clementine at fitfundone@gmail.com.

> The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.
>
> —Amelia Earhart

Yoga

Yoga RYT200 Teacher Training with Ema Stefanova • Flex Start and Finish Dates, Flexible In-Person and remote learning. • Our teacher training is student-centered, fun, practical, and well designed to systematically deepen your understanding of all aspects of yoga, help develop your personal practice (Sadhana), help develop skills for safely teaching yoga including meditation, and help integrate yoga and meditation in your professional career as a social worker, schoolteacher, massage therapist, or healthcare professional. For more information, contact Ema at YogaAndMeditation.com.

Open Level Yoga (via Zoom) with Michele Bond • Beginning May 2, Sundays 4-5:30 p.m., Tuesdays 6-7:30 p.m., Saturdays 10 - 11:30 a.m. • Each student is encouraged to honor their own unique abilities and limitations in this mixed level class, with variations offered for all levels. Our method blends the science of biomechanics with an openhearted, uplifting philosophy. Learn to look for the good in yourself and others as you enjoy a dynamic practice. Instructor will observe alignment and offer individual attention. Time for questions and conversation after class. $14 if registered for semester, $18 drop in with instructor's permission. Contact Michele at michele@yogahouseannarbor.com or 734 358-8546; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Intro to Yoga (Six-week course via Zoom) with Michele Bond • Beginning May 3, Mondays • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • Always wanted to try yoga? Then this class is for you! Join us for an introduction to this beautiful art and science of yoga, and the many ways we can use our practice to enhance all aspects of our lives. Classes are on Zoom, with instructor observing and offering individual attention. Time for questions and conversation after class. $84 for 6 weeks. Contact Michele Bond at 734-358-8546 or michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga for Athletes with Michele Bond • Wednesdays, beginning May 5 • 6-7:30 p.m. • Athletes or anyone looking for a strong practice will enjoy increasing core strength, enhancing flexibility, agility, balance, and mental focus with this fun and energetic practice. Universal Alignment Principles help open the door to peak performance in sports and all areas of your life. Classes are on Zoom, with instructor observing alignment and offering individual attention. Time for questions and conversation after class. $14 if registered for semester, $18 drop in with permission of instructor. Contact Michele Bond at 734-359-8546 or michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga Essentials (via Zoom) with Michele Bond • Thursdays, Beginning May 6 • 6-7:30 p.m. • For those new to yoga, or new to this system; Learn Universal Principles of Alignment that are an invaluable aid to learning the postures, deepening your understanding of the body, developing a yoga practice that is safe, joyful, therapeutic, and fun! Classes are on Zoom, with instructor observing alignment and offering individual attention. Time for questions and conversation after class. $14 if registered for the semester $18 drop in with instructor's permission. Contact Michele Bond at 734-358-8546 or michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga Sustainable Resiliency: Tend and Befriend with Cyndi Lee • Thursday, May 13 • 7:00 p.m. • This class is a receptive practice of meditation, restorative yoga, pranayama, and contemplative journaling to reset our nervous system. By tending and befriending ourselves with quiet purpose, we begin to get familiar with how to best care for ourselves, even with just one breath. During the class, you will need 2-3 blankets and 2-3 bolsters (or rolled towels/blankets). $20 Jewel Heart Members / $25 Non-Members. No one is turned away due to financial considerations. To register, go to the Jewel Heart website at jewelheart.org. For more information, call Jewel Heart at 734-994-3387 or send an email message to programs@jewelheart.org.

Virtual and In-Person Yoga Classes at The Yoga Room with Christy DeBurton, RYT • See website for current class options and pricing. • Multi-faceted virtual courses, pop-up outdoor classes, private outdoor and virtual sessions. Hatha, Vinyasa, Yin, Yoga for HSPs, Aqua Yoga and more. Contact Christy at info@christydeburton.com; yogaroomannarbor.com.

General Well-being Open Level Class with Ema Stefanova, E-RYT500, C-IAYT • Ongoing, various days and times• Visit YogaAndMeditation.com for more information or to contact Ema.

Yoga for All Levels (online) with Sue Salaniuk • May through August • 9:30 a.m. • Yoga taught for everyone regardless of experience. Classes are online, individualized and students are helped to progress at their own pace. $98/7 weeks or $15/class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

Beginning/Supported Yoga (online) with Sue Salaniuk • May through August • 10:00 a.m. • Yoga for beginning students or those who wish a more supported approach. $98/week or $15/single class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

Experienced Intermediate Yoga (online) with Sue Salaniuk • May through August • 6:00 p.m. • For experienced students who are working on inversions or appropriate alternatives. $98/7 weeks $15/class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

All Levels Yoga (online) with Sally Rutzky • May through August • 9:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. • Yoga taught for everyone regardless of experience. Classes are online, individualized and students are helped to progress at their own pace. $98/7weeks or $15/single class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

All Levels Yoga (zoom) with Susan Bellinson • May through August • 10:30 a.m. • Yoga for anyone regardless of experience. $126/9 classes or $15/1 class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

Beginning Yoga (zoom) with Susan Bellinson • May through August • 5:30 p.m. • Yoga for brand new students or those wishing to learn again. $84/6 classes or $15/1 class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

Beginning Yoga (online) with Susan Bellinson • May through August • 5:45 p.m. • This new class is for people new to yoga. Class is taught so each student can do yoga no matter their age, flexibility, or strength. $98/7 weeks or $15/single class. Contact sue@yogaspaceannarbor.com.

On May 1, 2021, The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal will be available on our website: www.crazywisdomjournal.com.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and the Centers

Susan Bellinson has taught for 21 years and holds a level 2 Iyengar yoga certificate.

Vanessa Beltran is a public health dietitian and policy practitioner with a passion for community wellness, health equity, and human development. Her commitment to social justice and training at Harvard University has led her to Girls Empowerment Network in Austin, Texas.

Rita Benn, PhD is an accomplished teacher, clinical/school psychologist, and researcher who has been practicing meditation since her college years. She has facilitated many group-based workshops using mindfulness-based practices. As U-M faculty, she advanced the field of integrative medicine.

Dmitry Berenson, a Zen practitioner, robotics professor, and published poet, has been leading Zen and poetry workshops for JissoJi Zen Ann Arbor for several years.

Susan Billmaier is Co-owner of Evenstar's Chalice and Evenstar Institute. She holds a PhD in Political Science from Rutgers University. She is a certified Reiki Master, a Jharra Practitioner, a Pujari, and creator of the With Pearls Consciousness Journeys.

Carol Blotter has led over 80 retreats across the nation and taught over 100 meditation classes to diverse groups over the last 23 years. Also involved with the Quaker tradition, she blends her 30+ years of meditation practice with other mystical traditions. She is the primary teacher of Chelsea Meditation Group.

Sharon Foley Bock is an Adrian Dominican Associate who was privileged to study under the direction of some of the finest Adrian Dominican artists in the original Studio Angelico at Siena Heights (College) University. You can see some of her work at http://sharon-bock.pixels.com.

Michele Bond is highly trained in yoga, therapeutics, and meditation, with an extensive athletic background including dance, martial arts and synchronized swimming, Michele makes yoga accessible and fun.

Patty Brennan is the visionary force behind Lifespan Doulas. For 38 years, she has been active as a doula/educator, training over 2000 doulas. Patty is the author of *The Doula Business Guide: How to Create a Successful Birth, Postpartum, or End-of-Life Doula Business.*

Supa (Greg) Corner has been practicing Buddhism since 1979. He was ordained in the Chogye order of Korean Zen Buddhism. In 1987, he began studying Tibetan Buddhism with late master Kyabje Gelek Rimpoche, and is currently a Jewel Heart instructor, community chaplain, and Director of Jewel Heart's West Michigan chapter.

Gwyn Jones is a STOTT Piltes Mat and TRX certified instructor. She is currently teaching online classes, and leading personal training sessions and workshops. Her classes take her clients on a journey through natural movement excercises to help reap the benefits of restoring and sustaining natural movement habits. She brings a variety of exercise options to her classes, personal training sessions, and workshops. Visit gwynjonespilates.com to learn more about Gwyn, her classes, training sessions, and workshops.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle - writers group based at Crazy Wisdom.

Marta Dabis is an ordained Zen priest, leader of JissoJi Zen Ann Arbor, a board-certified hospital chaplain and researcher of clinical spiritual care. Marta trained residentially at the San Francisco Zen Center.

Christy DeBurton is a Registered Yoga Teacher and Wellness Educator with over 20 years' experience. She is the founder of The Yoga Room in Ann Arbor, where she currently offers both virtual and outdoor private and group classes.

Tarianne DeYonker, OP, MSW is part of the Amherst Writers and Artists Affiliate.

Connie Lee Eiland has been a Shamanic Practitioner since 2000. She studied with Sandra Ingerman, Carol Proudfoot-Edgar, Herb Stevenson and more. She has also worked as a Physical Therapist for 50+ years.

Kristin Ervin is the founder of Got Mindfulness, LLC. facilitating training to K-12 students and educators in Southeast Michigan. She earned certification from Mindful Schools as well as from the Mindful Education Institute where she studied under Jon Kabat-Zinn and Jack Kornfield.

Mara Evenstar holds a master's degree of Transpersonal Psychology with a certification in Spiritual Psychology and a Master of Education focusing on Leadership and Social Transformation.

Evenstar Institute offers classes for exploration and deepening, so that seekers and seasoned may find and walk their path in a supportive, encouraging environment.

Dr. Massimo Faggioli is professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Villanova University (Philadelphia). His books and articles have been published in more than ten languages. He is a columnist for *Commonweal* and *La Croix International*.

Kelly Fordon, award-winning writer and teacher from the Detroit metro area, explores personal and class conflicts in city and suburb. Her two recent story collections are *I Have the Answer* and *Garden for the Blind*. Her poetry includes one book, *Goodbye Toothless House,* and three chapbooks.

Austeen Freeman is a writer, life-long learner, and facilitator of healing. She is the author of the *Mystic Wanderer Oracle* cards, a journaling workshop instructor, and teacher of virtual and in-person yoga classes at Free to Be Yoga & Massage.

John Friedlander is an internationally acclaimed psychic, author, and teacher with degrees from Duke University and Harvard Law School. He studied with Jane Roberts in first Seth class and Berkley Psychic Institute with Lewis Bostwick.

Karen Greenberg is a Registered Physical Therapist, who taught at University of Maryland Hospital, dance students at Dance Studios she owned, has traveled for decades, and continues teaching virtual Personal/Spiritual Growth to seekers worldwide. She is also a Certified Essence Repatterning Practitioner.

Karla Groesbeck has nearly 25 years' experience in the body movement, meditation, qigong, and martial aspects of Tai Chi Chuan. She is owner and founder of Tai Chi Love Studios in Ann Arbor.

Cindy Guillean has been sharing the magic of writing and self-expression with others for more than 30 years. She is a teacher, learner, seeker, writer, Reiki Master, Cognitive Coach, National Writing Project Fellow, and an awakening soul.

Craig Harvey is a long-time practitioner and supporter of peace.

Amy Hertz, a member of Jewel Heart for more than 30 years, has been the editor of many bestselling Buddhist books, several by Thich Nhat Hanh. She has taught in Jewel Heart centers across the United States as well as at Tibet House in São Paulo, Brazil.

Christy Hirsch holds an MBA and a doctorate in organizational leadership; she is a certified Immunity to Change Map Facilitator, certified NLP practitioner, and is a certified hypnotherapist.

Barbara Hutton is a life-long student in human development and evolution, long-term student, and practitioner of energy healing (including Reiki and many other modalities). She earned a BFA and an MA, (Masters in Community Counseling, including School Counseling Endorsement), and is a CHt.

Dale Jensen is a Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner and owner of Michigan Feldenkrais in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He has a long-standing interest in teaching, movement, well-being, and healing.

Jewel Heart is dedicated to the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and to bringing the practice of this rich tradition within the context of contemporary life to everyone.

David Jibson is an editor and former social worker.

JissoJi Zen Ann Arbor follows a Japanese Soto Zen lineage. The American practices originate in the San Francisco Zen Center, with Shrunyu Suzuki, author of Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind.

Gwyn Jones is STOTT Pilates Mat and TRX certified. I bring a variety of exercise options to my classes, personal training sessions and workshops. Movement Matters. How we Move Matters.

Upasna Kakroo is a published author and blogger since 2003. She is the Executive Director of Marketing for the Alumni Association at the University of Michigan and when she is not solving marketing challenges, she is sketching.

Esther Kennedy, OP, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, Michigan, is a retreat leader and spiritual director. Esther conducts a monthly Day of Mindfulness at Weber Center.

Rev Annie Kopko is an interfaith minister.

Cyndi Lee has taught yoga and meditation for over 30 years. She is the founder of the NYC-based OM Yoga Center, author of five books including the classic text *Yoga Body Buddha Mind*, and an ordained Lay Buddhist Chaplain.

Lifespan Doulas offers professional doula training and certification, as well as guidance for creating a sustainable birth, postpartum or end-of-life doula business.

Eric Lockwood is a published author who lives in Ann Arbor and presents yearly at Write On in a variety of topics.

Joseph Loizzo is a contemplative psychotherapist, clinical researcher, writer, and business consultant in neuroscience and optimal health. He founded Nalanda Center for Contemplative Science, is on faculty at the Weill Cornell Center for Integrative Medicine and the Columbia University Center for Buddhist Studies.

Michelle McLemore has combined her Healing Touch energy certification with Reiki, Sacred Geometry, and stress management tools for clients and workshops for 15+ years. She developed, and taught, the first known U.S. H.S. stress management psychology course and is expanding it for all ages.

The Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education (MC4ME) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing education through mindfulness practices. Our network of intervention professionals has a passion for teaching mindfulness and compassion to students, families, and educators.

Lexi Mohney is a published author who lives in Ann Arbor and presents yearly at Write On in a variety of topic.

Rob Meyer-Kukan is a Licensed Massage Therapist, Sound Therapist, and Natural Health Consultant.

Edward Morin is a writer, editor, translator, and former university teacher.

> We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.
>
> —Plato

Guy Newland is Professor of Religion and Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Central Michigan University, where he has taught since 1988. He has authored, edited, and translated several books on Tibetan Buddhism.

Lissa Perrin is a poet and former clinical social worker.

Rocky Shadowbear Rains has been a Folk Magician and Shamanic Practitioner for over 40 years in the Native American, Appalachian, and Celtic Traditions.

Judy Liu Ramsey has served through shamanic practice and animal communication for nearly 12 years, is an approved teacher of shamanic practice through Sandra Ingerman and offers classes. She also teaches four levels of Penelope Smith's animal communication, including interspecies counseling.

The background information listed here pertains specifically to individuals and centers whose classes, workshops, and events are listed in this current issue of the Crazy Wisdom Calendar. If you are a holistic/spiritual/psychological growth practitioner in the area, but don't regularly lead classes or workshops, you can still be listed for free in our online Holistic Resource Guide. List your practice and add your logo, photo, and even a short video. To claim your listing, please visit AnnArborHolistic.com.

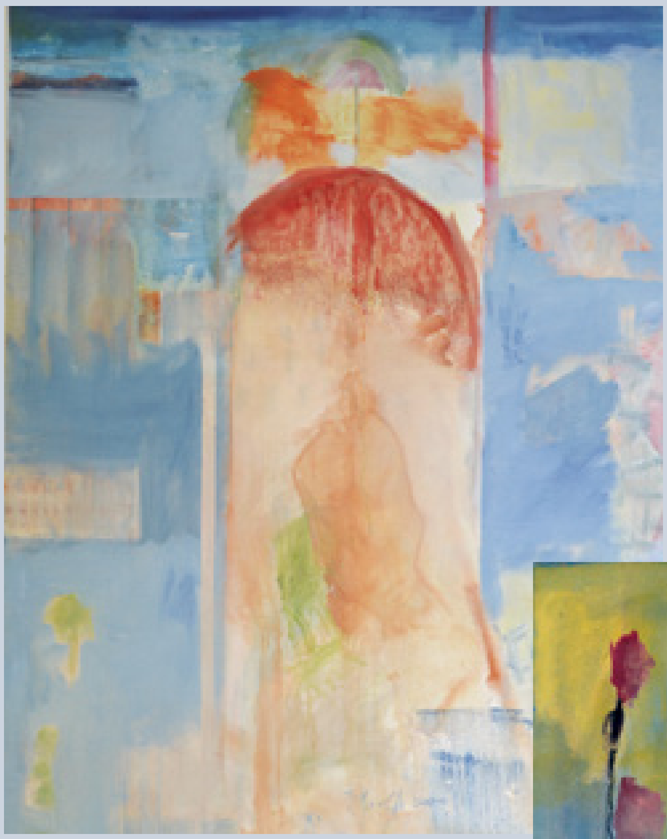
Visual Journaling:

Image and Word, a Journey to Self-expression

By Nancy Wolfe

“A Picture is worth a thousand words.”

This quote is sometimes attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte, who said, "A good sketch is better than a long speech." Creating a journal with images and words is a place to honor your experiences through exercises that expand your own process of describing your world and your distinct expression of it. It is a journey into the heart of self-expression, free from competition and comparison.



I was 43 years old when I took my first art class at Eastern Michigan University. Brush in hand, I had this feeling of inner fulfillment and joy. I was fortunate, abstraction was accepted, and I painted on a large canvas on the floor. I decided after that experience, to take a drawing class.

Most of my own paintings are abstract but with something recognizable within it. In some of my artworks, I like to add a word or a phrase to the surface of the work. At times, the word comes as a spontaneous reaction to the canvas or paper I've painted on, or I open pages of a book that I've been reading or have formed an attachment to. I'll read for a phrase that makes a visceral connection to my work. I usually do not form a title to a work until I am midway into my process.

> Creating a journal with images and words is a place to honor your experiences through exercises that expand your own process of describing your world and your distinct expression of it.

One painting I called “My cup of Ocean” and I wrote that freely on the artwork. It was based on a conversation with a friend, both of us dreaming about wanting to move near the ocean. I painted “My cup of Ocean” on a large canvas with dark blue background. Once I painted a very large canvas of a Yam and wrote on the canvas “What makes a Yam Beautiful.” I saw a variation of these words under a small photograph in an article about Chanel titled “What makes a Woman Beautiful.”

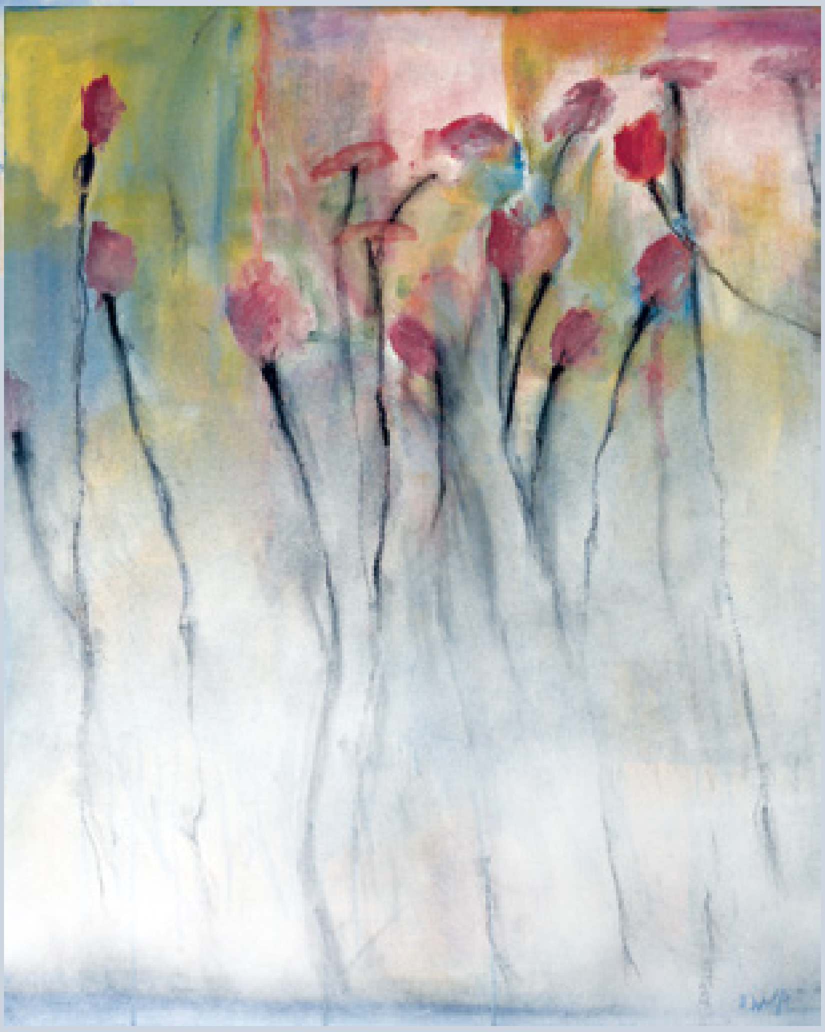
A yam visually reminds me of a curvy figure, as a sculptured object. The muted orange color is exquisite. The threads go in different directions. A yam is strong despite its bruises—whether from mishandling or growing under the ground. I love to touch the yams as I pick them out, large in the center tapering off at the ends. Of course, the bonus is its sweet taste.

> My process has become something like magic as I intuitively use my “senses” to paint.

My paintings are “freedom” for me. My process has become something like magic as I intuitively use my “senses” to paint. When I am teaching, I offer my students techniques within exercises that broaden their awareness of their own capacity to do “art,” and to acknowledge the importance of finding and accepting one's own approach in the vast “vocabulary” of the art world of today. I have been teaching a visual journaling workshop for the last 23 years. It is designed to open new paths to communicate experiences and encourage self-expression through both imagery and words.

Students work with sound, color, memory, poetry, music, and mythology in exercises and projects that help expand creative thinking. We emphasize process over product and have five core tenets: Everyone is welcome regardless of experience, every student has something to say, consider everything as an experiment, we learn from each other, ideas are welcomed, there is no right or wrong, and exploration is valued.

> Students work with sound, color, memory, poetry, music, and mythology in exercises and projects that help expand creative thinking.



Nancy Wolfe has been an Adjunct Professor at UM, WCC and EMU, and currently teaches a yearly 2-day Workshop for the Art Education, Art Therapy Dept. at WSU. She has exhibited her work at local galleries and in Toledo and Chicago. She recently retired from the position of Art Coordinator at Kerrytown Concert House. For information on Wolfe's Visual Journaling Workshop, email Nancy at nancy@nancywolfe.com or visit her online at nancywolfe.com.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and the Centers, Continued.

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Gelek Rimpoche (1939–2017) was the Founder and Spiritual Director of Jewel Heart. Among the last generation of incarnate lamas tutored by the great masters in Old Tibet, Rimpoche's command of western culture allowed him to convey the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with wisdom, kindness, and wit.

Demo Rinpoche is Jewel Heart's Resident Spiritual Advisor. He studied nearly 30 years at Drepung Loseling Monastery under the Dalai Lama; he received Geshe Lharampa in 2011. His studies continued at Gyume Tantric College, Sera College of Higher Tibetan Studies, and Union Theological Seminary.

David Rosenberg has been teaching yoga since 1993 and traveled to Pune, India in 1996 to study at the Ramamani Memorial Yoa Institute.

Sally Rutzky has been teaching for 38 years and holds a Level 2 Iyengar yoga certificate.

Hartmut Sagolla has been studying Tibetan Buddhism for 30+ years. He lived at the Tibetan Buddhist Society, Melbourne, Australia before moving to the U.S.; since 2002 he has served as a Program Director at Jewel Heart. He is a long-time Jewel Heart instructor and Director of the Bloomfield Hills chapter.

> The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.
>
> —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sue Salaniuk holds a Level 3 Iyengar yoga certification, is RYT 500, and is also certified by the International Yoga Therapist Association. She has taught for 37 years.

Josie Schneider is an international house sitter, writer, blogger, and experience junkie.

Mary Spence is a program faculty member, experienced mindfulness teacher, and co-founder of the Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education.

Julie Sottek offers assistance to those searching for higher vibrational personal change through natural solutions. She is a Shaman, Holy Fire®III Karuna®Reiki Master and dōTERRA Wellness Advocate with 12 years of energy experience working with crystal and plant companions.

Lisa M. Teets has been a Bowenwork practitioner for 9 years. She also teaches math, yoga, and Pilates.

William Trowbridge is a poetry mentor in the University of Nebraska Omaha Low-residency MFA in Writing Program and was Poet Laureate of Missouri from 2012 to 2016. His eighth poetry book is *Oldguy: Superhero—The Complete Collection*. His ninth, *Call Me Fool*, is forthcoming from Red Hen in 2022.

Ema Stefanova is a master yoga and meditation teacher, and classical yoga therapist of 30+ years. She is the director of Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation Registered School, trains teachers at the RYT 200-500 levels, and hosts retreats. Ema's work has been featured on TV and multiple magazines.

UCM is an ecumenical Spiritualist Organization created to support the work of healing and spiritual growth as it emerges through the members by providing legal status throughout the USA.

Marian Volkman is an AMI: Certified Advanced Instructor qualified to teach all TIR and Applied Metapsychology courses, member of Association of Traumatic Stress Specialists: Certified Trauma Treatment Specialist, and author of *Life Skills, Improve the Quality of Your Life*.

Eve Wilson is UCM Reverend, Master Healer, World Healer, and Ascension Worker. Director of The Healer Development Program, she is an award winning and best-selling author and blogger. Additionally, she trains Certified Healer Practitioners.

Carolyne Wright, a Seattle native, author of ten books of poetry and translator of five volumes of poetry from Spanish and Bengali. The title poem of *This Dream the World: New & Selected Poems* received a Pushcart Prize and was included in *The Best American Poetry* 2009.

The Yoga Space has been helping students learn yoga since 1998.

Jihyun Yun received her BA in Psychology from UC Davis, and her MFA from New York University where she was a fully funded fellow. Originally from California, she now resides in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Karlta Zarley has been a nurse for 40 years and has been in private practice for 23 years as a professional healer/educator. She provides energy work, spiritual direction, and essential oils and flower essence consultations. An intuitive, she also leads retreats and classes.

Dr. Jay Sandweiss is one of the better known and most respected integrative physicians in southeastern Michigan. He is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association in neuro-musculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine. He is also board certified in medical acupuncture.

Advertiser Directory

Alice Mixer	19
Ann Arbor School of Massage	20
Ann Arbor Pharmacy	88
Ashes in Art Glass	59
Back 2 Basics Health and Nutrition/ Juli Johnson	19
Betsy Adams, author	87
Bgreen, Inc.	19
Bio Energy Medical Center	27
Bobbi Kowalski	16
Caroline Charlesworth	20
Carol Trembath, author	51
Castle Remedies	16
Cherie Ann McMullen	19
Conrad J. Welsing	19
CW - Poetry Ad	85
CW Weekly E-zine	81
Dalat Restaurant	21
Deb Collins Psychotherapy	20
Deep Spring Center	89
Dr. Raymond Kong / Acupuncturist	18
DNA Sales 2100	56
Earth Elements	27
Elizabeth Hurwitz Elder Law	18
Eve Wilson	21,27
Fair Food Network	24
Fiery Maple Wholistic Healing	41
Frog Holler	73
Ginger Chase Massages	20
Healthy Births-Healthy Lives/Beth Barbeau	43
Henry Buchtel	18
Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth	5
Jessica Ryder	20
Judy Ramsey / Heart to Heart Animal Communication	18
Karlta Zarley	37
Krasnick Regenerative Medicine	7
Leslie Science & Nature Center	41
Lori Curry	21
Lou Weir/ The Diamond Approach	17
Malcolm Sickels / Ann Arbor Thermography	91
Marni Schmid	5
McLaren Wealth	17
Melisa Schuster, LMSW	18
Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education	55
Michigan Merinos/Happy Goat Lucky Farm	21
Mindtation - Personal/Spiritual Development	20
Monica Turenne / Four Paws Veterinary	24
Mystic Creations	21
Nanci Rose Gerler	19
New Earth Home and Garden	20
Nia Spongberg	19
NITE - Naturopathic Institute	Back Cover
Neighborhood Theatre Group	21
Noel Kemeny	27
Northern Sky and Beyond/ Alice Davinich	18
Pacific Acupuncture Center	18
People's Food Co-op	71
Pop Designs and Creations	18
Readings with Gail	19
Reiki Healing Hands/ Michelle Salisbury	6
Roos Roast	15
Rosanne Emanuele	18
Rudolf Steiner School	Inside Back Cover
Sacred Lotus Experience/ Alicia Clark-Teper	89
Sacred Sexuality/ Leslie Blackburn	21
Seed Cellar	Inside Front Cover
Seven Notes Natural Health/ Rob Meyer-Kukan	20
Sing Ann Arbor	31
Stephen Rassi / Chrysalis Facilitation and Counseling	20
Susan Billmaier, PhD	18
Susan McGraw	19
Suzy Wienckowski/ Reiki	21
Symmetry Biofield Therapy	19
The Intentional Living Collective	1
The Power of / Shellie Powers	88
Transitions LLC/Linda Bender	20
Triple Crane Monastery	17
Valiant Realty Michigan/ Linda B. Long	5
Victoria Schon	4
Vijayalaxmi Shindi	59
Wisdom Heart Coaching/ Larissa Czuchnowsky	47
World of Rocks	79
Yoga Space / Sue Salaniuk	56

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—Kristen Madrid, Owner, Earth Elements

"Being local and supporting local is what we do! **Sharing those values with the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal is why we advertise** with them. They are an amazing resource for folks in the community to learn about what's happening.

—Ken Davis, Marketing Director, People's Food Co-op

"**My advertisement in the Crazy Wisdom Journal brings me a lot of business.** People come in saying they saw my ad in the Journal. Generally, I have found that word of mouth is the best way to build business, but **advertising in Crazy Wisdom Journal has really paid for itself. I love you guys!!**"

— Cathy Boaz, Owner, Kokopelli's Korner

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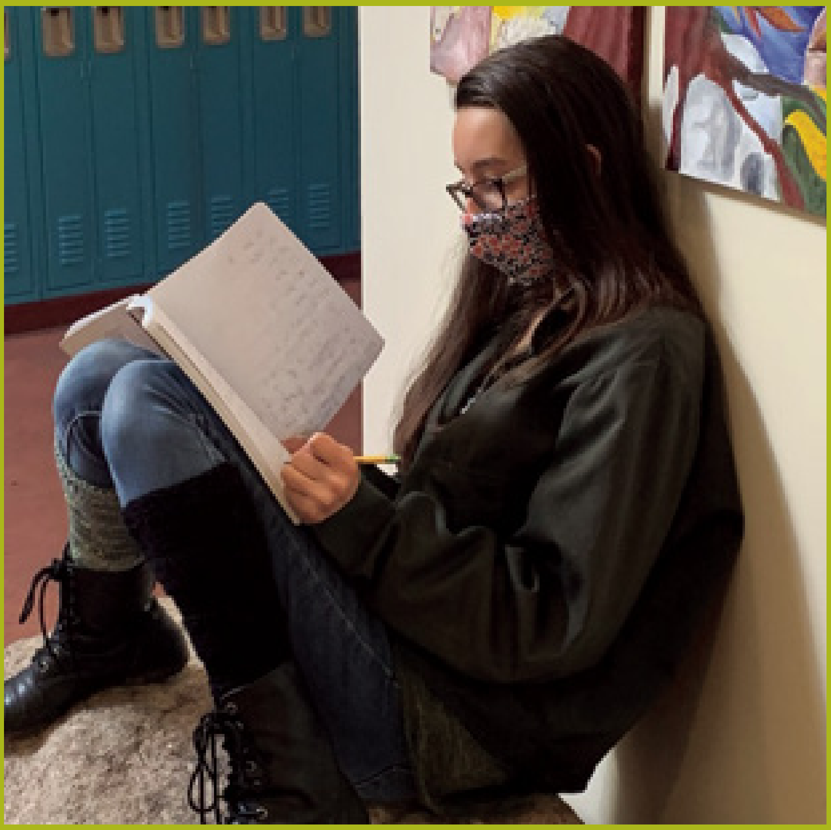

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